

Personification

Intersections

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Personification

Embodying Meaning and Emotion

Edited by

Walter S. Melion and Bart Ramakers



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Cover illustrations: (*foreground*) Johannes Wierix after Maarten de Vos, “Deathly Falsehood”, detail from *Triumphus Veritatis* (1579). Engraving, 440 × 345 mm. British Museum, London; (*background*) Cornelis Cort after Maarten van Heemskerck, “East and West Winds”, detail from *Triumph of the World*, plate 1 of the *Cycle of the Vicissitudes of Human Affairs*, 1564. Engraving, 220 × 295 mm. British Museum, London. *See also pages 164 and 414 of this volume.*

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Contents

Notes on the Editors	IX
Notes on the Contributors	X
List of Illustrations	XVI

Personification: An Introduction	1
<i>Walter S. Melion and Bart Ramakers</i>	

PART 1 *Cognitive Perspectives on Personification*

1 Personification Allegory and Embodied Cognition	43
<i>Jean Bocharova</i>	

PART 2 *Personification and the Critical Tradition*

2 Dante and St. Francis: Shaping Lives, Reshaping Allegory	73
<i>Jeremy Tambling</i>	
3 Personification, Power, and the Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern English Poetry	95
<i>William Rhodes</i>	
4 The Personification of the Human Subject in Spenser's <i>The Faerie Queene</i>	121
<i>Brenda Machosky</i>	

PART 3 *Personification and the Modalities of Figuration*

5 Framework, Personification, and Pisanello's Poetics	143
<i>C. Jean Campbell</i>	
6 The Triumph of Truth in an Age of Confessional Conflict	162
<i>James Clifton</i>	

- 7 **The Mystical Experience—Between Personification and Incarnation:
The *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp,
Jacob Mesens: 1680s) 186**
 Ralph Dekoninck

PART 4

Personification on Stage: Forces of Living Presence

- 8 **From the Parade to the Stage: Evolution and Significance of
Personifications in Lyon's *Sotties* (1566–1610) 211**
 Katell Lavéant
- 9 **Personification in Sir David Lyndsay's *A Satire of the Three
Estates* 234**
 Greg Walker
- 10 **Both One and the Other: The Educational Value of Personification in
the Female Humanist Theatre of Peeter Heyns (1537–1598) 256**
 Alisa van de Haar
- 11 **Dirty from Behind, Pearly in Front: Lady World in Rhetoricians'
Drama 284**
 Bart Ramakers
- 12 **Mute Poem, Speaking Picture: The Personification of the *Paragone*
in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* 337**
 Jennifer A. Royston
- 13 **The Politics of Personification in the Jacobean Lord Mayors'
Shows 354**
 Susan L. Anderson

PART 5

Jesuit Approaches to Personification

- 14 **Figured Personification and Parabolic Embodiment in Jan David's
Occasio arrepta, neglecta 371**
 Walter S. Melion

- 15 Double Meaning of Personification in Early Modern Thesis Prints of the Southern Low Countries: Between Noetic and Encomiastic Representation 433

Gwendoline de Mûelenaere

- 16 Vermeer, the Art of Meditation, and the Allegory of Faith 461

Aneta Georgievska-Shine

PART 6

Personifying Charity

- 17 Personifications of Caritas as Reflexive Figures 491

Caecilie Weissert

- 18 Maarten van Heemskerck's *Caritas*: Personifying Virtue, Animating Stone with Paint, Imaging the Image Debate 518

Arthur J. DiFuria

- 19 Abraham Bloemaert and Caritas: A Lesson in Perception 545

Caroline O. Fowler

PART 7

Personifying Life and Afterlife, Trial and Retribution

- 20 The Duchess and the Cadaver: Doubling and Microarchitecture in Late Medieval Art (with Alice Chaucer and John Lydgate) 575

Elizabeth Fowler

- 21 'But You are Blind, and Know Not What is in You': 'A.L.', The Fraudulent Judge, and the Coerced Conscience 601

June Waudby

PART 8

Personification and the Assertion of Allegorical Order

- 22 Precarious Personification: Fortuna in the Artist's Cabinet 629
Lisa Rosenthal
- 23 Producing the Legible Body: Personification, the Beholder, and
 Tiepolo's Würzburg Frescos 655
Max Weintraub

PART 9

The Four Continents: Sources and Sentiments

- 24 The Personification of Africa with an Elephant-head Crest in Cesare
 Ripa's *Iconologia* (1603) 677
Joaneath Spicer
- 25 The Four Continents in Seventeenth-Century Embroidery and the
 Making of English Femininity 716
Heather A. Hughes
- Index Nominum 751

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Elegance and Refinement: The Still-Life Paintings of Willem van Aelst (with Tanya Paul and Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr.; 2012); and *Pleasure and Piety: The Art of Joachim Wtewael* (with Liesbeth M. Helmus and Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr.; 2015).

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List of Illustrations

- 1 Theodoor Galle, "Emblem 45: 'Mundus delirans, non sapit quae Dei sunt'". Jan David, s.J., *Veridicus Christianus* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1601). Engraving, 20 cm. (quarto). Chicago, The Newberry Library 17
- 1.1 Anonymous, *The Redcrosse Knight*. Woodcut, quarto. Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene* [...] (London, John Wolfe for William Ponsonbie: 1590). The Huntington Library, San Marino, 56742 56
- 1.2 William Kent, *The Redcrosse Knight is saved from Despair by Una*. Copper plate, quarto. Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene* [...] (London, for J. Brindley and S. Wright: 1751), San Marino, The Huntington Library, 221307 57
- 2.1 Giotto (also attributed to the St. Cecilia Master), *Scenes from the Life of St. Francis: Homage of a Simpleton*. Fresco. Assisi, Church of San Francesco. Image © Scala Archives, Florence 80
- 3.1 Title page of [William Langland,] *The Vision of Pierce Plowman* [...] (London, Richard Grafton: 1550). Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library, STC 19906. Courtesy of the Folger Shakespeare Library 96
- 3.2 Title page of Robert Crowley, *Philargyrie of greate Britayne* (London, Richard Grafton: 1551). New Haven, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, STC 6089.5. Courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library 109
- 4.1 Opening of *Two Cantos of Mutabilitie*. Edmund Spenser, *The faerie qveene* [...] (London, H. Lownes for Mathew Lownes: 1609) 353. Cambridge, MA, Houghton Library, Harvard University, STC 23083. Courtesy of the Houghton Library 123
- 4.2 Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, *Queen Elizabeth I* ("The Ditchley portrait") (c. 1592). Oil on canvas. London, National Portrait Gallery. Courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery 127
- 5.1 Pisanello and Nanni di Bartolo, *Brenzoni Monument* (completed 1426). Multimedia wall painting and marble sculpture. San Fermo Maggiore, Verona. Image © Laura Somenzi 144
- 5.2 Pisanello, *Study of a Hare* (c. 1440). Watercolor and black chalk on vellum, 13.9 × 22.5 cm. Paris, Louvre (Cabinet des dessins, INV 2445). Image © RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, New York 147
- 5.3 Leonardo da Vinci, *Study of Cats* (c. 1515). Pen and ink, ink wash and black chalk on vellum 27 × 21 cm. Windsor, Royal Collection, Her Majesty Elizabeth II. Image © Royal Collection, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 148

- 5.4 Pisanello, Annunciate Virgin. Detail of the *Brenzoni Monument*. Multimedia wall painting (completed 1426). San Fermo Maggiore, Verona. Image © SCALA, Florence/Art Resource, New York 154
- 5.5 Pisanello, Gabriel. Detail of the *Brenzoni Monument*. Multimedia wall painting (completed 1426). San Fermo Maggiore, Verona. Image © SCALA, Florence/Art Resource, New York 155
- 5.6 Annunciate Virgin and her entourage. Detail of the *Brenzoni Monument*. Multimedia wall painting (completed 1426). San Fermo Maggiore, Verona. Image © SCALA, Florence/Art Resource, New York 158
- 5.7 Pisanello, *Study of a Squid, a Leg, and Flowers* (c. 1440). Watercolor, pen and ink, ink wash, chalk, and metalpoint on vellum, 24.4 × 18.5 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre (Cabinet des dessins, INV 2262, Recto). Image © RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, New York 159
- 6.1 Johannes Wierix after Maarten de Vos, *Triumphus Veritatis* (1579). Engraving, 440 × 345 mm. London, The British Museum, 1859,0709.2950 164
- 6.2 Attributed to Hieronymus Wierix after Ambrosius Francken, *Excitatio hominis* (1578). Engraving, 269 × 344 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1906-185 168
- 6.3 Wierix family (?) after Ambrosius Francken, *Disobedience and Obedience* (1579). Engraving, 205 × 266 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1906-1824 169
- 6.4 Antonius II Wierix after Marten van Cleve, *The World Turned Upside-Down (De verkeerde Weerelt)* (1579). Engraving, 207 × 322 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-76.885 170
- 6.5 Wierix family (?) after Ambrosius Francken, *Envy and Charity* (1579). Engraving, 192 × 259 mm. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen, BdH 26189 (PK) 172
- 6.6 Monogrammist C.R. after Maarten de Vos, *Triumph of Truth* (1581). Engraving, 442 × 326 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1890-A-15262 175
- 6.7 Unknown engraver after Maarten de Vos, *Triumph of Truth* (1593). Engraving, 243 × 197 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1966-15 177
- 6.8 Antonius II Wierix, *Triumph of Truth*. Engraving, 95 × 64 mm. London, The British Museum, 1859,0709.3190 180
- 6.9 Unknown engraver, *Triumph of Truth*. Engraving. Jacob de Zetter, *Kosmographia Iconica Moralis* (Frankfurt, Johan Theodor de Bry: 1614) 182
- 7.1 "Paupertas". In *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 34. Maurits Sabbibliotheek, Louvain 189

- 7.2 “Mortificatio memoriae”. In *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 20. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain 191
- 7.3 “Sensualitas & ratio”. In *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 11. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain 192
- 7.4 “Modestia”. In *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 47. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain 193
- 7.5 “Mortificatio interior”. *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 15. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain 194
- 7.6 “Mortificatio exterior”. In *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 16. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain 195
- 7.7 “Mortificatio amoris proprii”. In *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 22. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain 196
- 7.8 “Spes”. In *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 29. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain 198
- 7.9 “Praesentia Dei”. In *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 59. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain 199
- 7.10 “Visiones”. In *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 95. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain 205
- 7.11 “Visiones”. In *Ichnographia emblematica triplicis ad Deum Tri-Unum mysticae viae* [...] (Augsburg, Ignatius Berhelst: 1779). Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain 206
- 8.1 Temps Présent on the title page of the *Discours du Temps Passé et du Présent* (Lyon, Pierre Brotot: 1568). Lyon, Municipal library, BM Rés. B493544. Image © Municipal library, Lyon 221
- 8.2 The Printing Press/Typosine on the title page of the *Colloque des trois supports* (Lyon, printer unknown: 1610). Lyon, Municipal library, BM Rés. 316454. Image © Municipal library, Lyon 229
- 9.1 Rex Humanitas (James Mackenzie) surrounded by vices (clockwise from bottom left, Annie Grace, Jimmy Chisholm, Stephen Docherty, and Barrie Hunter) in the 2013 production of *The Three Estates*. Courtesy of Historic Scotland 239

- 9.2 Pauper (David McKay) in the 2013 Linlithgow production of *The Three Estates*. Courtesy of Historic Scotland 245
- 9.3 Folly (Gerard Mulgrew) preaches, while Diligence (Liam Brennan) and Verity (Alison Peebles) look on. Image from the 2013 Linlithgow production of *The Three Estates*. Courtesy of Historic Scotland 253
- 10.1 Title page of Peeter Heyns, *Le miroir des mesnageres* (Haarlem, Gillis Rooman: 1595). Ghent, University Library, B.L. 9108 2bis. Image © Ghent University Library 258
- 10.2 Philip Galle and Hieronymus Cock after a drawing by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *Temperantia* (c. 1560–1562). Detail. Engraving, 224 mm × 296 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-7376 265
- 10.3 Peeter Heyns, *Le miroir des mesnageres* (Haarlem, Gillis Rooman: 1595) fols. C2v–C3r. Ghent, University Library, B.L. 9108 2bis. Image © Ghent University Library 266
- 11.1 Willem Isaacs. Swanenburch after David Vinckboons, *Village Fair with Goose Pulling* (c. 1610). Detail. Engraving, 445 mm × 712 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1900-A-21966 285
- 11.2 Jacques Horenbault, *The Haystack* (1608). Detail. Etching, 394 mm × 518 mm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-48.961 291
- 11.3 Gnawing Conscience (*Vroegende Conscientie*), Deadly Scare (*Doodelick Verschricken*), and Hellish Suffering (*Helsche Liden*). Entry of the chamber of Haastrecht in Haarlem, 1606. Detail. Engraving. In *Const-thoonende irweel, by de loflijcke stad Haerlem, ten versoecke van Trou moet blijcken, in 't licht gebracht* (Zwolle: Zacharias Heyns: 1607). Groningen, University Library, uklu 'EP'EP E 251 A 296
- 11.4 Anonymous (published by Johannes Baptista Vrints the Elder), *Dance around the World* (c. 1600). Engraving, 329 mm × 414 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1906-4301 297
- 11.5 Pieter Serwouters after David Vinckboons, *The Christian Knight* (1614). Engraving, 297 mm × 358 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1882-A-6076 298
- 11.6 Hieronymus Wierix after Maarten de Vos, *The Christian Knight* (1563–before 1619). Engraving, 298 mm × 388 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-67.023 299
- 11.7 Hieronymus Wierix, *Four Enemies of Righteousness* (1560–1601). Engraving, 301 mm × 341 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1906-1851 300
- 11.8 The Haarlem stage of 1606. Engraving. *Const-thoonende irweel, by de loflijcke stad Haerlem, ten versoecke van Trou moet blijcken, in 't licht*

- gebracht* (Zwolle: Zacharias Heyns: 1607). Groningen, University Library, uklu 'EP'EP E 251 A 302
- 11.9 Moderation (*Maticheijt*), Envy (*Nidicheijt*), and Greed (*Giericheijt*). Entry of the chamber of The Hague in Haarlem, 1606, detail. Engraving. In *Const-thoonende irweel, by de loflijcke stad Haerlem, ten versoecke van Trou moet blijcken, in 't licht gebracht* (Zwolle: Zacharias Heyns: 1607). Groningen, University Library, uklu 'EP'EP E 251 A 306
- 11.10 Hieronymus Wierix, *The Christian Knight*. Engraving, 9.1 cm × 5.9 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1904-138 312
- 11.11 Johannes Wierix after Pieter Brueghel the Elder, *The Misanthrope Robbed by the World*, (1566–1570). Engraving, d. 178 mm, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1939-397 323
- 11.12 Crispijn van de Passe the Elder, *The Topsy-Turvy World* (1574–1637). Etching, 238 mm × 269 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1911-291 330
- 11.13 Copy of Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert after Maarten van Heemskerck, *Democritus and Heraclitus or Allegory of the Vanity of the Human Passions* (original 1557). Engraving, 227 mm × 253 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1963-258 331
- 12.1 Title page of William Shakespeare, *The Life of Timon of Athens*. *Mr. William Shakespeares comedies, histories, & tragedies: published according to the true originall copies* (London, Edward Blount and Isaac Jaggard: 1623) 80–81. Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library 343
- 12.2 Hans Sebald Beham, “*Fortuna*” (1541). Engraving, 79 × 51 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-10.856 349
- 14.1 Workshop of Philips Galle, Title-Page, *Veridicus Christianus*. Engraving, in-quarto. In Jan David, s.j., *Veridicus Christianus* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana: 1601). The Newberry Library, Chicago 372
- 14.2 Theodoor Galle, Title-Page, *Occasio*. Engraving, in-octavo. In Jan David, s.j., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 373
- 14.3 Theodoor Galle, Title-Page, *Paradisus*. Engraving, in-octavo. In Jan David, s.j., *Paradisus sponsi et sponsae: in quo messis myrrhae et aromatum, ex instrumentis ac mysterijs Passionis Christi colligenda, ut ei commoriamur. Et Pancarpium Marianum, septemplici titulorum series distinctum: ut in B. Virginis odorem curramus, et Christus formetur in nobis* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1607; reprint ed., Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Balthasarem et Ioannem Moretos fratres: 1618). The Newberry Library, Chicago 374

- 14.4 Theodoor Galle, Title-Page, *Duodecim specula*. Engraving, in-octavo. In Jan David, s.J., *Duodecim specula Deum aliquando videre desideranti concinnata* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1610). The Newberry Library, Chicago 375
- 14.5 Theodoor Galle, Fronstispiece, *Orbita probitatis ad Christi imitationem Veridico Christiano subserviens*. In Jan David, s.J., *Veridicus Christianus* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana: 1601). The Newberry Library, Chicago 377
- 14.6 Theodoor Galle, Fronstispiece, "Occasio. Drama". In Jan David, s.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 379
- 14.7 Jan David, "Schematis I. explicatio; Quo Tempus & Occasio sua munia in Typo declarant". In idem, *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 381
- 14.8 Jan David, "Ad Occasionem R.P. Ioannis David Prosopopoeia". In idem, *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 382
- 14.9 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 1: Time and Occasion Expound their Gifts". Engraving. In Jan David, s.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 390
- 14.10 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 2: The Angel Calls to Virtue, the Devil Calls Away from It". Engraving. In Jan David, s.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 392
- 14.11 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 3: Foolish [Boys], at the Instigation of Satan, Waste Time Shamefully". Engraving. In Jan David, s.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 393
- 14.12 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 4: At the Demon's Urging, Occasion is Miserably Mocked". Engraving. In Jan David, s.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 394
- 14.13 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 5: Prudent [Boys] Studiously Observe Time and Occasion". Engraving. In Jan David, s.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta.*

- Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 395
- 14.14 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 6: Eager [Boys] Embrace Occasion's Opportunities", Engraving. In Jan David, s.j., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 396
- 14.15 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 7: While Time Slips Away, They Stay Occasion by the Hair of her Brow". Engraving. In Jan David, s.j., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 397
- 14.16 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 8: Imprudent [Boys], Having Come to their Senses Too Late, Deplore their Folly". Engraving. In Jan David, s.j., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 398
- 14.17 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 9: Having Slipped Away, Time and Occasion Are Pursued not Overtaken". Engraving. In Jan David, s.j., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 399
- 14.18 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 10: How much Harm, How much Danger There Is in Neglecting Occasion". Engraving. In Jan David, s.j., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 400
- 14.19 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 11: The Angel Wrests Away the Devil's Prey, Impelling Them to Repent". Engraving. In Jan David, s.j., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 401
- 14.20 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 12: The Disparate Ends of Occasion Seized and Shirked". Engraving. In Jan David, s.j., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). The Newberry Library, Chicago 402
- 14.21 Cornelis Cort after Maarten van Heemskerck, *Triumph of the World from Cycle of the Vicissitudes of Human Affairs*, 1564. Engraving, 220 × 295 mm. British Museum, London 414
- 15.1 Richard Collin after Erasmus Quellinus, *Philippe Leerse Presents his Philosophy Thesis to M. Simeomo*, University of Louvain (1674).

- Engraving, 41.2 × 60.7 cm. Brussels, National Archives of Belgium. Image © National Archives of Belgium (I 264–1700) 436
- 15.2 Michel Natalis after Abraham van Diepenbeeck, *De iure belli et pacis theses*, defended by Johannes Michael and Ferdinand Morel, University of Louvain (1645). Engraving, 102.9 × 68.9 cm. Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium. Image © Royal Library of Belgium 438
- 15.3 Raphael, *Justice* (ceiling tondo). Stanza della Segnatura, Palazzi Pontifici, Vatican (1508–1511). Fresco, diameter: 180 cm. Image © 2014. Photo Scala, Florence 440
- 15.4 Raphael, *The Cardinal Virtues* (lunette from the south wall). Stanza della Segnatura, Palazzi Pontifici, Vatican (1508–1511). Fresco, width at the base: 660 cm. Image © 2014 Photo Scala, Florence 441
- 15.5 Pieter Danoot after Antoine Sallaert, *Theses physiomaticae ex bellicis staticis et opticis*, defended by Philippe Eugène de Hornes, Jesuit school of Mathematics, Louvain (1651). Engraving in two parts, 72 × 52.5–74 × 55.5 cm. Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium. Image © Royal Library of Belgium 444–445
- 15.6 Cornelis Galle after Erasmus Quellinus, *Leopoldo Guillelmo Austriaco forti sapienti belli pacisque moderatori*. Title page to a philosophy thesis defended by Christoph Bredau, College of Anchin, Douai (1648). Engraving, 23.6 × 17.6 cm. Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium. Image © Royal Library of Belgium 446
- 15.7 Adriaan Lommelin after Antoine Sallaert, Title page to *Synopsis theologica*, defended by Humbert de Precipiano, Jesuit College of Louvain (1648). Engraving, 39.3 × 24.1 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. Image © Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam 448
- 15.8 Nicolas Lauwers after Abraham van Diepenbeeck, *Theses mathematicae ex geometria, arithmetica, architectura militari*, defended by Théodore d'Immerseel, Jesuit School of Mathematics, Louvain (1652). Engraving, 98 × 68.5 cm. Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium. Image © Royal Library of Belgium 450
- 15.9 Jacob Neeffs after Philip Fruytiers, Title page of *Disciplinae mathematicae traditae*, supervised by Jan Ciermans, Jesuit School of Mathematics, Louvain (1640). Engraving, 28.5 × 17.7 cm. Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium. Image © Royal Library of Belgium 451
- 15.10 Cornelis Galle, “B. Franciscus Borgia stemma suum virtute nobilitat”. Engraving, 10.4 × 13.9 cm. *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu, a Provincia flandro-belgica eiusdem Societatis repraesentata* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1640) 722. Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium. Image © Royal Library of Belgium 453

- 16.1 Johannes Vermeer, *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* (1671–1672). Oil on canvas, 45 × 35 in. (114.3 × 88.9 cm). New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; The Friedsam Collection, Bequest of Michael Friedsam, 1931 (32.100.18). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art 463
- 16.2 Christoffel Jegher after Pieter van Avont, “Capit quod non capit”. In [Guilielmus Hesius,] *Guilielmi Hesii Antverpiensis Societate Jesu Emblemata de Fide, Spe, Charitate* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1633) 88. Engraving. Washington, D.C., The National Gallery of Art. Image © The National Gallery of Art 469
- 16.3 Christoffel Jegher after Pieter van Avont, “Omnia in uno et in omnibus unus”. In [Guilielmus Hesius,] *Guilielmi Hesii Antverpiensis Societate Jesu Emblemata de Fide, Spe, Charitate* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1633) 18. Engraving. Washington, D.C., The National Gallery of Art. Image © The National Gallery of Art 471
- 16.4 Christoffel Jegher after Pieter van Avont, “Bene conueniunt”. In [Guilielmus Hesius,] *Guilielmi Hesii Antverpiensis Societate Jesu Emblemata de Fide, Spe, Charitate* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1633) 6. Engraving. Washington, D.C., The National Gallery of Art. Image © The National Gallery of Art 473
- 16.5 Hieronymus Wierix after Bernardo Passeri, *The Annunciation*. In Jerónimo Nadal, *Evangelicae historiae imagines: ex ordine Euangeliorum quae toto anno in Missae sacrificio recitantur, in ordinem temporis vitae Christi digestae* (Antwerp, Societas Jesu: 1593) 1. Engraving. Washington, D.C., The National Gallery of Art. Image © The National Gallery of Art 477
- 17.1 Lambert Lombard (attr.), *Caritas with Children* (c. 1560). Panel, 114.5 × 92 cm. St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum. Image © The State Hermitage Museum. Photo by Svetlana Suetova 492
- 17.2 Frans Floris, *Caritas with Children* (c. 1560). Panel, 156 × 107 cm. St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum. Image © The State Hermitage Museum. Photo by Svetlana Suetova 494
- 17.3 Jan Massys, *Caritas with Children* (c. 1550–1555). Panel, 126 × 93 cm. Genoa, Palazzo Bianco. Image © Galleria Palazzo Bianco 496
- 17.4 Jan Massys, *Caritas with Children* (c. 1550–1555). Panel, 147 × 112.5 cm. Ader-Tajan, auctioned in Hôtel George V, 28.6.1994. Image © Archive, Institut für Kunstgeschichte der Universität Stuttgart 497
- 17.5 Quentin Massys (workshop), *Madonna with Cherries* (c. 1520). Panel, 0.76 × 0.62 cm. Paris, Darcy Collection. Image © Archive, Institut für Kunstgeschichte der Universität Stuttgart 499

- 17.6 Jean Mignon after Andrea del Sarto, *Caritas* (1544). Engraving, 270 × 189 mm. Image © The British Museum 500
- 17.7 Vincent Sellaer, *Venus and Amor* (c. 1550). Drawing, 20.4 × 26.2 cm. Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstich-Kabinett. Image © Institut für Kunstgeschichte der Universität Stuttgart 502
- 17.8 Vincent Sellaer, "*Jupiter and Antiope*" (c. 1535–1545). Panel, 140 × 103 cm. Paris, Louvre, R.F. 1981–45. Image © RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre)/Jean-Gilles Berizzi 503
- 17.9 Gerard Janssen van Kampen – Arnold Nicolai after Geoffroy Ballain – Pieter Huys, woodcut illustration to Hadrianus Junius, *Emblemata* (Antwerp, Christophe Plantin: 1565) 18: "Emblem XII ('Uxoriarie dotes')", 165 × 98 mm. Image © Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Stuttgart 508
- 18.1 Maarten van Heemskerck, *Caritas* (c. 1545). Oil on Panel, 715 × 365 mm. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemaeldegalerie, Vienna, Austria (Inv. No. GG2683). Image © Art Resource, New York 519
- 18.2 Philips Galle, after Maarten van Heemskerck, Frontispiece, *Clades Judææ Gentis* (1569). Engraving, 282 × 237 mm. Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin. Image © Art Resource, New York 524
- 18.3 Dirck Volkertszoon Coornhert, after a drawing by Maarten van Heemskerck (?), *Casa Sassi Cortile and Sculpture Collection* (1553). Engraving, 375 × 298 mm. London, British Museum, 1928,0313.176. Courtesy of the British Museum 528
- 18.4 Maarten van Heemskerck, *St. Luke Painting the Virgin* (c.1545). Oil on wood, 205.5 × 143.5 cm. Rennes, Musée des Beaux-Arts. Image © Art Resource, New York 529
- 18.5 Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Bruges Madonna* (1501–1504). Marble, 200 cm. Church of Our Lady, Bruges. Image © Art Resource, New York 532
- 18.6 Raphael Sanzio, *Galatea* (1512). Fresco, 295 × 225 cm. Villa Farnesina, Rome. Image © Art Resource, New York 533
- 18.7 Andrea del Sarto, *Carità* (c. 1510). Grisaille fresco. Florence, Chiostro dello Scalzo. Image © author 535
- 18.8 Philips Galle, after a drawing by Maarten van Heemskerck, *The Reward of Labor and Diligence* (1572). Engraving, 21 × 25 cm. London, British Museum, 1875,0710.442. Courtesy of the British Museum 536
- 18.9 Jan and Hubert van Eyck, *Polyptych with the Adoration of the Lamb* (completed 1432). Overall view of the closed workday panels. Oil on wood, 350 × 223 cm. Cathedral of St. Bavo, Ghent. Image © Art Resource, New York 537

- 18.10 Andrea Alciato, "Emblem 189: Mentem, non formam, plus pollere". In *Emblematum liber* (Augsburg, Heinrich Steyner: 1534) fol. C5r. Image © University of Glasgow Library, Special Collections 540
- 19.1 Frederick Bloemaert after Abraham Bloemaert, "A Young Draftsman". *Artis Apellae liber* (1650–1656), plate 1. Engraving and woodcut, 30.5 × 22.3 cm. London, The British Museum of Art, Collection of Prints and Drawings. Image © The Trustees of the British Museum 546
- 19.2 Frederick Bloemaert after Abraham Bloemaert, "Caritas". *Artis Apellae liber* (1650–1656), plate 40. Engraving and woodcut, 19 × 15.2 cm. London, The British Museum, Collection of Prints and Drawings. Image © The Trustees of the British Museum 549
- 19.3 Frederick Bloemaert after Abraham Bloemaert, "Lesson 2". *Artis Apellae liber* (1650–1656), plate 2. Engraving, 19 × 14.8 cm. London, The British Museum, Collection of Prints and Drawings. Image © The Trustees of the British Museum 551
- 19.4 Frederick Bloemaert after Abraham Bloemaert, "Lesson 20". *Artis Apellae liber* (1650–1656), plate 25. Engraving, 21.5 × 17.4 cm. London, The British Museum, Collection of Prints and Drawings. The Trustees of the British Museum 552
- 19.5 Hendrick Goltzius and Claes Jansz. Visscher (II), "Caritas" (1585–1589). Engraving, 21.8 × 14.3 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-27.294 554
- 19.6 Frederick Bloemaert after Abraham Bloemaert, "Saint in Prayer". *Artis Apellae liber* (1650–1656), plate 20. Engraving and woodcut, 18.5 × 15.3 cm. London, The British Museum, Collection of Prints and Drawings. Image © The Trustees of the British Museum 561
- 19.7 Frederick Bloemaert after Abraham Bloemaert, "Lesson 9". *Artis Apellae liber* (1650–1656), plate 9. Engraving, 21.3 × 12.7 cm. London, The British Museum, Collection of Prints and Drawings. Image © The Trustees of the British Museum 566
- 19.8 Otto van Veen and Gijsbrecht van Veen, "Oculus non vidit". *Amoris divini emblemata* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana Balthasar Moreti: 1615), plate 1. Engraving, 13 × 11 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum 568
- 20.1 Detail of the tomb of Alice Chaucer, Duchess of Suffolk (before 1475). Alabaster and paint. St. Mary's Church, Ewelme, Oxfordshire, England 577
- 20.2 Angels on the sarcophagus. Tomb of Alice Chaucer, Duchess of Suffolk (before 1475). St. Mary's Church, Ewelme, Oxfordshire, England 579
- 20.3 The disposition of the tomb of Alice Chaucer, Duchess of Suffolk (before 1475). St. Mary's Church, Ewelme, Oxfordshire, England 581

- 20.4 The 'windows' require a penitential posture. Tomb of Alice Chaucer, Duchess of Suffolk (before 1475). St. Mary's Church, Ewelme, Oxfordshire, England 582
- 20.5 The transi effigy inside the 'windows'. Tomb of Alice Chaucer, Duchess of Suffolk (before 1475). St. Mary's Church, Ewelme, Oxfordshire, England 583
- 20.6 Tomb of Thomas and Matilda Chaucer (c. 1434–1437). Stone and brass. St. Mary's Church, Ewelme, Oxfordshire, England 587
- 20.7 Spitz Master, Man dying lower left, his soul ascending in the form of a child guided by an angel, upper right (Paris, c. 1420). Miniature, tempera colors, gold, and ink on parchment, leaf. 20.2 × 14.9 cm. Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. 57, fol. 194. Courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program 589
- 20.8 Master of Antiphonar of Padua, Dante asleep and his soul walking (Padua or Emilia, first half of 14th c.). Miniature, in colors and gold on parchment. 390 × 260 mm. *Inferno*. London, British Library, Egerton MS 943, fol. 3r. Image © The British Library 592
- 20.9 Guy Marchand, *Chorea ab eximio Macabro* (Paris, 1490). Woodcuts influenced by the lost mural at the cemetery of the Innocents, which depicted the verses translated by Lydgate. Print folio in Latin with woodcuts 26.5 cm. Washington, Library of Congress, Incun. 1490. D26 N7720.M18 595
- 21.1 Title page of Anne Locke, *Sermons of John Calvin, upon the songe that Ezechias made (...)* (London, John Day: 1560). Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library, STC 4450, n.f. Image © Folger Shakespeare Library 602
- 21.2 Opening of *A Meditation of à penitent sinner, vpon the 51. Psalm*. Anne Locke, *Sermons of John Calvin, upon the songe that Ezechias made (...)* (London, John Day: 1560). Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library, STC 4450, n.f. Image © Folger Shakespeare Library 604
- 21.3 Page opening of "Preface, expressing the passionned minde of a penitent sinner". Anne Locke, *Sermons of John Calvin, upon the songe that Ezechias made (...)* (London, John Day: 1560). Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library, STC 4450, n.f. Image © Folger Shakespeare Library 620
- 21.4 Page opening with incipit 'Presume to mercy to direct my sight'. Anne Locke, *Sermons of John Calvin, upon the songe that Ezechias made (...)* (London, John Day: 1560). Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library, STC 4450, n.f. Image © Folger Shakespeare Library 623

- 22.1 Frans Francken the Younger, *The Painter's Cabinet* (c. 1627). Oil on panel, 54 × 69 cm. Private collection, Las Arenas, Getxo, Spain 631
- 22.2 Workshop of Frans Francken the Younger, *Allegory of Opportunity* (c. 1628). Oil on panel, 48.5 × 66.5. Périgueux, Musée d'Art et d'Archéologie du Périgord. Image © Musée d'Art et d'Archéologie du Périgord 635
- 22.3 Frans Francken the Younger, *The Painter and the Poet* (1618). Pen with brown and blue ink, brown wash on paper, 29.1 × 19.8 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre (Inv. No.19981). Image © RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, New York 637
- 22.4 Adriaen van Stalpent, *A Collector's Cabinet* (c. 1621). Oil on panel, 93 × 114 cm. Madrid, Museo del Prado (Inv. No. 1.405). Image © Erich Lessing/Art Resource, New York 639
- 22.5 Frans Francken the Younger, *Allegory of Painting, Poetry, and Music* (1636). Oil on panel, 93.5 × 123.3 cm. Private collection. Image © Bridgeman Art Library/Private Collection/Johnny Van Haeften Ltd., London 641
- 22.6 Frans Francken the Younger, *An Artist's Studio*. Pen and brown ink with brown wash over black chalk on laid paper, 20.4 by 31.7 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Julius S. Held Collection, Accession no. 1985.1.32.a. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art 642
- 22.7 Maarten de Vos, *Saint Luke Painting the Virgin* (c. 1602). Oil on panel, 270 × 217 cm. Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerpen. Image © KIK-IRPA, Brussels 643
- 22.8 Johann Sadeler I, after Maarten de Vos, *Mercury*, from the series *Planetarum effectus et eorum in signis zodiaci* (*The Seven Planets*) (1585). Engraving, 24.2 × 24.7 cm. The Baltimore Museum of Art, Garrett Collection, BMA 1946.112.6894. Photography by Mitro Hood 646
- 22.9 Jan Saenredam after Hendrick Goltzius, *Mercury and his Children* (1596). Engraving, 257 × 180 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-10.599 647
- 22.10 "Ars naturam Adiuuans. Emblema xcviii", in Alciati, *Omnia Andreae Alciati v.c. emblemata* (Antwerp, Christopher Plantin: 1581). Engraving. Courtesy of The Rare Book & Manuscript Library of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 648
- 22.11 Pieter de Jode after Anthony van Dyck, *Frans Francken the Younger* (c. 1630). Engraving, 21.2 × 15.1 cm. National Gallery of Art,

- Washington, D.C., Rosenwald Collection, Accession no. 1943.3. 8271.
Courtesy of the National Gallery of Art 652
- 23.1 Giambattista Tiepolo, *Allegory of the Planets and the Continents* (1752–1753). Treppenhause ceiling fresco, Würzburg, Germany 656
- 23.2 Giambattista Tiepolo, “Asia” (1752–1753). Treppenhause ceiling fresco, Würzburg, Germany. Detail, left section 658
- 23.3 Giambattista Tiepolo, “Asia” (1752–1753). Treppenhause ceiling fresco, Würzburg, Germany. Detail, right section 659
- 23.4 Giambattista Tiepolo, “Asia” (1752–1753). Treppenhause ceiling fresco, Würzburg, Germany. Detail, figure of Asia 665
- 23.5 Giambattista Tiepolo, “Europe” (1752–1753). Treppenhause ceiling fresco, Würzburg, Germany 667
- 23.6 Giambattista Tiepolo, “Africa” (1752–1753). Treppenhause ceiling fresco, Würzburg, Germany. Detail, left section with merchants and smokers 668
- 23.7 Giambattista Tiepolo, “Europe” (1752–1753). Treppenhause ceiling fresco, Würzburg, Germany. Detail, left section 671
- 24.1 Anonymous after Giovanni Guerra (attrib.), “Africa”. In Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia* (Rome, Lepido Faeij: 1603) 337. Los Angeles, The Getty Research Institute 678
- 24.2 Roman mint, *Roman Aureus with Portrait of Hadrian (obverse) and Africa (reverse)* (134–138 CE). Gold, 7.32 grammes. London, British Museum. Image © Trustees of the British Museum 681
- 24.3 *Roman Denarius with Head of Africa (obverse) and Hercules (reverse)* (minted in Mauretania on behalf of Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio, 47–46 BCE). Silver, 3.82 grammes. London, British Museum. Image © Trustees of the British Museum 684
- 24.4 Antonio Correggio, *Studies for the Camera di San Paolo* (c. 1519). Red chalk, 5.9 × 15.7 cm. London, British Museum. Image © Trustees of the British Museum 688
- 24.5 Cornelis Cort after Giulio Romano, *The Battle between Scipio and Hannibal at Zama* (1567). Engraving, 41.9 × 53.7 cm. London, British Museum. Image © Trustees of the British Museum 691
- 24.6 Alessandro Allori (attr.), *Sons of Atlas*. Lead pencil (?), brown wash, notations in chalk and brown ink, 43.3 × 29.1 cm. Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale 693
- 24.7 Taddeo Zuccaro (studio), *Design for an Overdoor Decoration*. Pen and brown ink with brown wash, traces of black chalk, 23.5 × 42.2 cm. Harvard Art Museum/Fogg Museum, Bequest of Meta and Paul J.

- Sachs. Photo: Imaging Department. Image © President and Fellows of Harvard College 697
- 24.8 Abraham Ortelius, Title page of *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Antwerp, [H. Goltzius]: 1570 [1592 edition]). Engraving with added wash, 41.1 × 26.7 cm. Baltimore, Walters Art Museum 698
- 24.9 Hubert Goltzius after his own design, Title page of *Caesar Augustus: sive, historiae imperatorum caesarumque romanorum ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae* (Bruges, [H. Goltzius]: 1574). Engraving. Los Angeles, The Getty Research Institute 700
- 24.10 Hubert Goltzius after his own design, “Coin reverses”. In *Caesar Augustus: sive, historiae imperatorum caesarumque romanorum ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae* (Bruges, [H. Goltzius]: 1574) Pl. xxxv. Engraving. Los Angeles, The Getty Research Institute 702
- 24.11 Roman coin with Portrait of Octavian (*observe*) and Africa (*reverse*) (minted in Mauretania, 33–25 BCE). Copper alloy, 9.94 grammes. London, British Museum. Image © Trustees of the British Museum 702
- 24.12 Giovanni de Vecchi, “Personification of Africa”. Detail of *Mappa Mundi*, Room of the Maps, Villa Farnese, Caprarola (c. 1574). Fresco. Image © ICCD E56266 703
- 24.13 Fausto Rughesi (cartographer), *Map of Africa* (1597). Detail. Engraving, 53 × 68.5 cm. Austin, Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin, with permission 705
- 24.14 Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, *Personification of Africa*, from a series of the *Four Continents* (c. 1760). Fresco transferred to canvas, 81.9 × 108.6 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Grace Rainey Rogers, 1943 707
- 24.15 Alexandria mint (under auspices of Ptolemy I Soter), *Tetradrachm of the Deified Alexander (obverse) with Athena (reverse)* (c. 316–312 BCE). Silver, 17.1 grammes. London, British Museum. Image © Trustees of the British Museum 708
- 24.16 Numidian mint, *Coin with Head of Africa (reverse) and Janus (obverse)*, issued by Bocchus II, King of Numida (49–33 BCE). Copper alloy, 7.1 grammes. London, British Museum. Image © Trustees of the British Museum 709
- 25.1 Title page of Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Antwerp, Anthonis Coppens van Diest: 1573). Hand-colored engraving. Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute. Courtesy of the Getty’s Open Content Program 721

- 25.2 Anonymous, after Marcus Gheeraerts the Elder, "America", from a series of the *Four Continents* (c. 1590–1600). Engraving. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1919-1993 725
- 25.3 Pictorial Embroidery of the Four Continents and The Sacrifice of Isaac (1649). Silk and metallic threads, glass beads, and wire on silk; raised work. 47 × 35 cm. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, The Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection, 47.1032. Image © 2015 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 728
- 25.4 John Stafford (publisher), "Europa", from the *Four Continents* (c. 1630). Engraving. London, British Museum, 1870,0514.1176. Image © Trustees of the British Museum 729
- 25.5 John Stafford (publisher), "Asia", from the *Four Continents* (c. 1630). Engraving. London, British Museum, (1870,0514.1177). Image © Trustees of the British Museum 730
- 25.6 John Stafford (publisher), "Africa", from the *Four Continents* (c. 1630). Engraving. London, British Museum (1870,0514.1178). Image © Trustees of the British Museum 731
- 25.7 John Stafford (publisher), "America", from the *Four Continents* (c. 1630). Engraving. London, British Museum (1870,0514.1179). Image © Trustees of the British Museum 732
- 25.8 Beadwork Panel with Lady and Cavalier surrounded by the Four Continents (1651). Silk thread; opaque and translucent glass beads on satin, 41.3 × 54.6 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Estate of James Hazen Hyde, 1959 (59.208.68). Courtesy of www.metmuseum.org 733
- 25.9 "Ethiopian Soldier". Cesare Vecellio's *Habiti antichi, et moderni di tutto il mondo* (Venice, Appresso i Sessa: 1598) 735
- 25.10 Beadwork Basket with Charles II and Catherine of Braganza surrounded by the Four Continents (after 1662). Wire armature with beadwork of glass beads; satin worked with glass beads, seed pearls, silk and metal thread; couching, split, and satin stitches, 68.5 × 80 × 20.3 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Mrs. Thomas J. Watson Gift, 1939 (39.13.1). Courtesy of www.metmuseum.org 738
- 25.11 Needlework Picture with Pastoral Scene and the Four Continents (c. 1660–70). Silk and linen (?) fabrics, silk and metal threads, glass beads, feather filaments, padding pearls, wire; detached needlepoint, knots, basket, cut pile, laid, long and short, overcast, satin, and tent stitches, 41 × 51 cm. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum of Art and

- Archaeology, University of Oxford, The Feller Collection, Gift of Micheál and Elizabeth Feller, 2014 (WA2014.71.55). Photo © Christie's Images/Bridgeman Images 739
- 25.12 Sir Peter Lely, "Elizabeth Murray, Lady Tollemache, later Countess of Dysart and Duchess of Lauderdale (1626–1698) with a Black Servant" (c. 1651). Oil on canvas, 124 × 120 cm. Richmond-upon-Thames, Ham House © National Trust Images 743
- 25.13 Raised Work Picture of the Arrival of the Queen of Sheba at King Solomon's Encampment (second half of the seventeenth century). Private Collection. Courtesy of Bonhams 744
- 25.14 Paris and Pallas Athena with the Four Continents (second half of the seventeenth century). Raised work, 30 × 71 cm. Port Sunlight, Lady Lever Art Gallery 745
- 25.15 Needlework Mirror with the Four Continents (c. 1660). Silk thread and seed pearls on silk; raised and purled work, 49 × 54 cm. Private Collection. Courtesy of Bonhams 746

Personification: An Introduction

Walter S. Melion and Bart Ramakers

Personification, or *prosopopoeia*, the rhetorical figure by which something not human is given a human identity or ‘face’, is readily spotted, but the figure’s cognitive form and function, its rhetorical and pictorial effects, rarely elicit scholarly attention. As a communicative device it is either taken for granted or dismissed as mere convention. The aim of this volume is to formulate an alternative account of personification, to demonstrate the ingenuity with which this multifaceted device was utilized by late medieval and early modern authors and artists. The fact that literary and pictorial genres designed to appeal to large audiences, such as festival plays and royal entries, often utilize allegorical personification, indicates that the figure was seen to accommodate a wide spectrum of tastes and expectations. Personification operates in multiple registers—sensory and spiritual, visible and invisible, concrete and abstract—and it deals in facts, opinions, and beliefs. With reference to the visible, current events and situations were represented by means of personifications that objectified various social groups and institutions, as well as their defining ambitions and the forces that motivated them. As regards the invisible, processes of thinking, feeling, and experiencing were bodied forth by means of personifications that revealed how these *modi operandi* were constituted.

Our interest in personification is motivated by several trends that have emerged over the last decade in cultural (historical) studies, whereby artistic expression is approached from the point of view of the body, performance, and cognition. Seen in light of these trends, personification (along with the texts and artifacts that employ the figure) offers many research opportunities. In methodological terms, personification is susceptible to an approach that balances a more semiotic analysis, concentrating on meaningful effects, and a more phenomenological analysis, focusing on effects of presence. This approach would entail foregrounding the full scope of prosopopoeic discourse—not just the *what*, but also the *how*, not only the *signified*, but also the *signifier*.

The contributors to this volume address one or more of the following aspects of personification in their chapters. First, the theory of personification. What ideas about allegorical personification circulated in late medieval and early modern times? How were its principles and workings described, either explicitly or implicitly? How can modern neuropsychological insights concerning

metaphorical thinking be linked to theories of personification based in contemporary rhetorical theory? Second, the perception of personification. How did contemporary audiences perceive and interpret personifications? How did they react to them and make use of them? Did the device fulfill instructive, persuasive, propagandistic, mnemonic, or even meditative and contemplative functions? To what extent did personification stimulate the imagination or the inner eye? What about the element of playfulness? Third, the means of personification. How was the device constituted? What (self-)descriptive procedures of naming were involved? What kinds of visual and verbal interaction? What clothes, attributes, gestures, facial expressions, positions, and actions? What courses of events or chains of thought, aided either by dialogue (in plays) or inscriptions (on prints)? Fourth, and lastly, the context of personification. What were the wider circumstances within which personification and genres based on personification allegory came to be employed, and how do these circumstances help to explain both the contents and effects of the device in practice? Did particular religious, social, and political situations stimulate its use?

As already noted, personification is readily identified, but the figure's cognitive form and function, its rhetorical and pictorial effects, have elicited little scholarly attention. Another question, therefore, is: Why is personification hardly studied? To find the answer, we have to delve—albeit not too deeply—into the history of allegory, or more precisely, into the study of allegory and its critical tradition; excavating this background will bring to light the mutually supportive relationship and interdependence of textual and visual approaches to allegory and personification. Only by combining the insights and opinions of both textual and visual scholars, of literary and art historians—the project of this volume—is it possible to answer the questions posed above. Much has been written on allegory, far less on personification. Both, moreover, are mainly studied from a textual point of view. We believe it necessary to emphasize the essentially visual character of both. This introduction opens by dealing briefly with the relation between personification and allegory, but it deals mainly with the manner and meaning of personification, and concentrates on some contemporary voices that expound the form, function, and meaning of personification, especially from a pictorial point of view.

Personification and Allegory

Talking about personification means talking about allegory. One reason for this is that texts and images which are considered allegories very often contain personifications. Where personification is used, allegories come into being. For

this reason literary and art historians employ the term ‘personification allegory’ to denote both the procedure and the result of creating allegory through personification. Some even speak of allegory and allegories when they in fact mean personification and personifications. Traditionally, the study of allegory is the realm of textual scholars, literary historians in particular. And this for obvious reasons, since some written allegories from the medieval and early-modern periods—a number of which are discussed in this volume—are amongst the greatest treasures of world literature.

There is another reason for the dominance of literary scholars amongst the students of allegory. This is that the word has two meanings or, to be more precise, that it refers to two procedures: a manner of writing and a manner of interpreting.¹ The latter is called *allegoresis* and refers to the procedure of figural, non-literal reading of mythological and scriptural texts, especially the Bible.² Others speak of critical or hermeneutical allegory or (in German) ‘*autores-Allegorese*’.³ Allegory as a reading method is older than allegory as a manner of composition or style, which is also called rhetorical or creative allegory, and emerged from the moment the Greek term *allêgoria* (speaking) came to replace the term *hyponoia* (other-speaking):⁴ ‘*Allegoria* came to denote a form of writing as well as a form of reading’.⁵

As a compositional technique, allegory has always been a part of rhetoric. As a figure of speech or trope it is classified under *elocutio*, the third of the five canons of classical rhetoric. Quintilian in his *Institutio Oratoria* (8.6.44) provides the standard and often repeated—well into early modernity—definition of it: ‘Allegory, which is translated in Latin by *inversio*, either presents one thing in words and another in meaning, or else something absolutely opposed to

1 Tambling J., *Allegory*, The New Critical Idiom (London – New York: 2010) 21–23; and Copeland R. – Struck P.T., “Introduction”, in eadem, *The Cambridge Companion to Allegory* (Cambridge: 2010) 1–11, here 2. Also see Copeland R. – Melville S., “Allegory and Allegoresis, Rhetoric and Hermeneutics”, *Exemplaria* 3,1 (1991) 159–187.

2 On allegory mainly as a narrative procedure and on allegorical reading and interpretation, see, for example, Madsen D.L., *Rereading Allegory: A Narrative Approach to Genre* (New York: 1994).

3 Meier C., “Überlegungen zum gegenwärtigen Stand der Allegorie-Forschung”, in *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 10 (1976) 1–69, esp. 45–46. Also see Ohly F., “The Spiritual Sense of Words in the Middle Ages”, *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 41.2 (2005) 18–42; and Hellgardt E., “Erkenntnistheoretisch-ontologische Probleme uneigentlicher Sprache in Rhetorik und Allegorese”, in Haug W. (ed.), *Formen und Funktionen der Allegorie. Symposium Wolfenbüttel 1978*, Germanistische Symposien-Berichtsbande 3 (Stuttgart: 1979) 25–37, esp. 26–27.

4 Copeland – Struck, “Introduction” 2.

5 Ibid.

the meaning of the words. The first type is generally produced by a series of metaphors.⁶ Although he defines allegory in literary terms—the *Institutio*, after all, was a handbook of oratory—Quintilian and other rhetoricians, both classical and post-classical, are aware of the visual or pictorial aspects of this way of ‘other-speaking’ (or writing). Its aesthetic attraction and effect are attributed to its ability to arouse the listener’s (or reader’s) imagination, to bring lively images before the mind’s eye.

This is also true for personification or *prosopopoeia*, which Quintilian takes to mean impersonation (from *persona*, meaning mask in Latin) and defines in the *Institutio* (9.2.29–32) as:

a device which lends wonderful variety and animation to oratory. By this means we display the inner thoughts of our adversaries as though they were talking with themselves [...]. [W]e are even allowed in this form of speech to bring down the gods from heaven and raise the dead, while cities also and peoples may find a voice. There are some authorities who restrict the term personification to cases where both persons and words are fictitious, and prefer to call imaginary conversations between men by the Greek name of *dialogue*, which some translate by the Latin *sermocinatio*. For my own part, I have included both under the same generally accepted term, since we cannot imagine a speech unless we also imagine a person to utter it.⁷

6 This quotation and the following are taken from Quintilian, *The Institutio Oratoria*, trans. H.E. Butler, 4 vols., Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA – London: 1920–1922). Also see Tambling, *Allegory* 6; Copeland – Struck, “Introduction” 4; Haverkamp A., “Metaphore dis/continua: Figure in de/construction. Mit einem Kommentar zur Begriffsgeschichte von Quintilian bis Baumgarten”, in Horn E. – Weinberg M. (eds.), *Allegorie. Konfigurationen von Text, Bild und Lektüre*, Kunstwissenschaftliche Studien zur deutschen Literatur (Wiesbaden 1998) 29–45, esp. 42; Plett H.F., “Konzepte des Allegorischen in der englischen Renaissance”, in Haug (ed.), *Formen und Funktionen* 310–335, esp. 311; and Kurz G., “Zu einer Hermeneutik der literarischen Allegorie”, in *ibid.* 12–24, esp. 14–15.

7 He also uses the term for ‘fictitious speeches supposed to be uttered, such as an advocate puts into the mouth of his client’ (6.1.25); ‘character as revealed by speeches’ (1.8.3.); ‘an imaginary person speaking on behalf of the accused’ (4.1.69); and ‘the portrayal of the emotions of children, women, nations, and even of voiceless things’ (11.1.41). Cicero, in *De Oratore* (3.53.205), refers to ‘impersonation of people’ (‘personarum ficta inductio’); see Cicero, *De Oratore: Book III*, trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library (London – Cambridge, MA: 1968). The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (4.53.66) uses the term ‘conformation’ (‘conformatio’), and says it ‘consists in representing an absent person as present, or in making a mute thing or one lacking form articulate, and attributing to it a definite form and a language or a certain behavior to its character’; see [Cicero], *Ad C. Herennium* [...], trans. H. Caplan (London – Cambridge, MA: 1954). Also see Whitman, *Allegory* 267.

One aspect of allegory in general and of personification allegory in particular that is easily overlooked—especially by textual scholars preoccupied with the interpretation of allegories or with allegory as a hermeneutical procedure—is its mnemonic function.⁸ The most popular method of so-called artificial memory (*memoria artificialis*) was mentally to link the things to be remembered to images of living beings, objects, and the actions performed by and with them—so-called *imagines agentes* (acting images)—and place these within equally imagined spaces (*loci*) within larger constructs (usually buildings).⁹ Such mnemonic sequences amounted to allegories. In fact, the theatre—both the word and the edifice to which it refers—was used to designate or to represent such artificial memories.¹⁰

Few scholars clearly distinguish between narrative allegory and personification allegory,¹¹ or even refer at all to the fact that much creative allegory is in fact personification allegory.¹² Until the appearance in 1994 of James Paxson's seminal monograph on the topic (see below),¹³ literary scholars only dealt with it in books on allegory, albeit incidentally, if at all. Ernst Gombrich once remarked:

It seems to me sometimes that it [personification] is too familiar; we tend to take it for granted rather than to ask questions about this extraordinary predominantly feminine population which greets us from the porches of cathedrals, crowds around our public monuments, marks our coins and banknotes, and turns up in our cartoons and our posters.¹⁴

It apparently takes an art historian like Gombrich—or at least a literary historian with an interest in pictorial art (as well as a strong imagination)—not only

8 Plett H.F., “Konzepte des Allegorischen” 315–316; Murrin M., *The Veil of Allegory: Some Notes toward a Theory of Allegorical Rhetoric in the English Renaissance* (Chicago – London: 1969) 75–81; and Akbari S.C., *Seeing through the Veil: Optical Theory and Medieval Allegory* (Toronto etc.: 2004) 9.

9 Rossi P., *Logic and the Art of Memory: The Quest for a Universal Language* (Chicago – London: 2000) 1–20.

10 Yates F.A., *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: 1966; reprint ed., London: 2014).

11 Kurz G., “Zu einer Hermeneutik der literarischen Allegorie” 12–24.

12 Meijer, “Überlegungen” 46.

13 Paxson J.J., *The Poetics of Personification*, Literature, Culture, Theory 6 (Cambridge: 1994).

14 Gombrich E.H., “Personification”, in Bolgar R.R. (ed), *Classic Influences on European Culture A.D. 500–1500* (Cambridge: 1971) 247–257, here 248. On this indifference also see Nishimura S., “Personification: Its Functions and Boundaries”, *Papers on Language and Literature* 50,1 (2014) 90–107.

to appreciate but also to describe and analyze the essentially visual character of personifications, be they created materially for us to see or evoked virtually for us to imagine. Gombrich again:

If we ask what it was that led to the marriage between poetry and personification the true answer lies hardly on the purely intellectual plane. It lies less in the invention of suitable defining attributes than in the attractions of psychological and physiognomic characterization. [...] What I mean is that the artistic personification is inexhaustible to rational analysis. It is to this that it owes what might be called its vitality or simply its vividness. While we are under its spell we are unlikely to ask whether such a creature really exists or is merely a figment of the artist's imagination. And thus, the arts of poetry, of painting and sculpture, of drama and even of rhetoric aided by tradition can continue the functions of mythopoeic thought. Potentially personifications can always come to life again.¹⁵

Sometimes a distinction is made between two approaches to allegory: iconographic and rhetorical.¹⁶ Most studies fall within the latter category. They approach allegory with the apparatus of traditional narratology and word-based rhetoric. Allegories are treated as fictions with plots and characters, as stories that are told or recounted (*diegesis*), as opposed to shown and enacted (*mimesis*). Their metaphorical and prosopopoeic set-up is acknowledged, but the use of metaphor and *prosopopoeia* is analyzed on a theoretical and technical level only. We get definitions and interpretations, but we never learn how the mental imagery created through allegory affected audiences in the way Gombrich describes. Apodictic utterances such as, 'All allegories are texts, words printed or handpainted on a page. They are texts first and last; webs of words woven in such a way as constantly to call attention to themselves as texts'¹⁷—however true—do not bolster confidence that the vitality and vividness these words generated will receive due attention.

Since Quintilian defines allegory as 'a series of metaphors', studies of allegory almost always deal with metaphor. Given the fact that he also states that allegory (and metaphor for that matter) presents 'one thing in words and another in meaning', textual scholars in their analysis of allegories hardly reach beyond the words and tend to dwell on their meaning. Because *prosopopoeia* is not part of any classical definition of allegory, however constitutive it may be of it,

15 Gombrich, "Personification" 254–255.

16 Akbari, *Seeing through the Veil* 7.

17 Quilligan M., *The Language of Allegory: Defining the Genre* (Ithaca, NY – London: 1979) 25.

personification is only addressed in passing—again, if at all.¹⁸ Even the recent *Cambridge Companion to Allegory*, despite its ambition to offer guidance to students and scholars of diverse historical specializations, only deals with hermeneutical and textual, not visual allegory. Personification and *prosopopoeia* are hardly ever mentioned. Even essays dealing with literary masterpieces of personification tend to concentrate on *allegoresis*. However informative the volume may be on the aspects it does discuss, the visual and imaginative elements of allegory disappear from sight.

We do find this element addressed and treated explicitly, though, in a collection of art historical essays: *Early Modern Visual Allegory: Embodying Meaning*.¹⁹ In their introduction, editors Cristelle Baskins and Lisa Rosenthal state:

[...] the dynamic function of allegory might be situated most fundamentally in its mobilization of the intersecting energies of interpellation and interpretation. Visual allegories engage these energies with distinct force, for as objects designed for particular settings and as images that

18 In Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton, NJ: 1957), much personification allegory qualifies as 'naive allegory', that is, 'a disguised form of discursive writing' which 'belongs chiefly to educational literature on an elementary level: schoolroom moralities, devotional exempla, local pageants, and the like' (90). Angus Fletcher, in his classic *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* (Princeton, NJ – Oxford: 2012 [1964]), assures us that '[p]ersonified abstractions are probably the most obviously allegorical agents' (25), but he deals with them as characters, protagonists, heroes, or indeed agents in narratives, the interpretation of which forms the main focus of his attention. In Edward Honig's *Dark Conceit: The Making of Allegory* (New York: 1966 [1959]), the terms 'personification' or 'personification allegory' do occasionally pop up (5, 39, 52, 94), but the combination of the former with 'crudest' (128), 'limited' (180), and 'conventional' (191), and its designation as 'another form of literary analogy' (116), seem to suggest that he deems the figure to be one amongst many and mainly rudimentary. Maureen Quilligan's *The Language of Allegory* calls personification 'one of the most trustworthy signals of allegory' (42) and 'a wonderful tool for revealing intraphysic battles' (234), but that is as much as she has to offer on it. Jon Whitman's *Allegory: The Dynamics of an Ancient and Medieval Technique* (Cambridge, MA: 1987), contains two appendices, one on the history of the term 'allegory', another on the term 'personification', but nowhere in his book does he put the latter on an equal footing with the former. It is no different in his and others' contributions to Bloomfield M.W. (ed.), *Allegory, Myth, and Symbol*, Harvard English Studies 9 (Cambridge, MA: 1981).

19 Baskins C. – Rosenthal L. (eds.), *Early Modern Visual Allegory: Embodying Meaning* (Aldershot – Burlington, VT: 2007).

represent abstract ideas in embodied form, they operate in the physical world of the senses.²⁰

In this quotation, as in Gombrich's, the energy or vitality expended on viewers (or readers with a strong capacity for imagination) by visual allegory, including the embodied allegory of personification, is prioritized. Not until the image, be it real or imagined, has been fully perceived, experienced, and analyzed on this sensual, bodily level, can interpretation in the traditional iconological (or hermeneutical sense) begin. According to Baskins and Rosenthal, historians of visual culture 'are uniquely positioned to contend with the materiality of the sign, with its powerful denotative as well as connotative effects as it is apprehended through the senses and experienced in a tangible form'.²¹ Since textual scholars from a semiotic point of view tend to deal with the signified, visual scholars can help provide a fuller understanding and appreciation of the signifier. Baskins and Rosenthal refer to the '[m]ore recent attention to allegory's figural basis [which] builds upon over a decade of intense interdisciplinary focus on the body as a site of cultural meaning'.²² *Personification: Embodying Meaning and Emotion* shares this focus on embodied allegory and, more specifically, on personification allegory. Like Baskins and Rosenthal, we have endeavored to bring together both literary and art historians, asking them to reflect on personification as a mode of allegorical signification. Many of the questions posed in *Early Modern Visual Allegory* remain pertinent to the current volume: 'What does it mean to allegorize the human figure; what pressures bear upon and shape personifications; what kinds of meaning escape or exceed allegorized bodies?'.²³

Several contributors to *Personification: Embodying Meaning and Emotion* refer to James Paxson's *The Poetics of Personification*—and with good reason.²⁴ It offers a thorough analysis of personification and *prosopopoeia*, tracing its theory from Antiquity to the Postmodern, offering a critical apparatus, especially to textual scholars, for analyzing the figure's workings and meanings.

20 Baskins C. – Rosenthal L., "Introduction", in eadem, *Early Modern Visual Allegory* 1–10, here 1.

21 Ibid. 3.

22 Ibid. 4.

23 Ibid. 3.

24 Also see his later articles on the topic. Before Paxson's book fundamental discussions of personification remained limited to essays such as Frank R.W., Jr., "The Art of Reading Medieval Personification Allegory", *English Literary History* 20,4 (1953) 237–250; and Bloomfield M.W., "A Grammatical Approach to Personification Allegory", *Modern Philology* 60,3 (1963) 161–171.

Although Paxson, too, is primarily interested in narrative allegory, he is very much aware of the wider spectrum of allegorical usage, and consequently, of the visual and imaginative aspects of personification defined or alluded to by theorists both classical and modern. He speaks of 'localized', 'animate', or 'characterological' personification, and classifies it as a form of '[s]ubstanzialization', which 'subsumes all figural maneuvers wherein a literary text presents the translation of incorporeal abstractions into the corporeal members of several ontological categories'.²⁵ Later he quotes William Wordsworth's definition of personification: 'Voice assumes mouth, eye, and finally face, a chain that is manifest in the etymology of the trope's name, *prosopon poein*, to confer a mask or a face (*prosopon*)'.²⁶

Elsewhere Paxson deplores the fact that in allegory studies 'personification theory often falls off the table', and he asserts 'that the relinking of allegory and prosopopeia is the key to revitalizing allegory theory for literary criticism and art history'.²⁷ He makes this claim on the basis of a number of studies that appeared in the wake of *The Poetics of Personification*: they 'treat allegory and personifications as central topics' and 'champion a new materialism or enhanced materialism of allegory which [...] can help resuscitate interest in one of art and literature's most important pre-modern modes of representation'.²⁸ One does not necessarily have to share some of these authors' (or Paxson's own) enthusiasm for poststructuralist, postmodern, or deconstructivist writing on allegory in order to appreciate their 'reappropriation of personification or prosopopeia as the mode of allegory's most important trope via the foregrounding of the *body* or *figura*, classical rhetoric's phenomenological locus'.²⁹ Here Paxson refers to Quintilian, who in the *Institutio* (9.1.10) defines figure as a term that 'applies to any form in which thought is expressed, just as it applies to bodies which, whatever their composition, must have some shape'.³⁰ Thus, Paxson not only spans the distance between classical and postmodern literary theory, he also alerts us to the work of those literary and art historians of

25 Paxson, *The Poetics of Personification* 30, 33, 40.

26 Ibid. 69; and Tambling, *Allegory* 43.

27 Paxson J., "Re(facing) Prosopopeia and Allegory in Contemporary Theory and Iconography", *Studies in Iconography* 22 (2001), ed. R.K. Emmerson – P. Sheingorn (Kalamazoo, MI: 2001) 1–20, here 4–5.

28 Ibid. 2–3.

29 Ibid. 7.

30 Ibid. n. 22.

the twentieth century who share his fascination with the body as a carrier of meaning—not least, Erich Auerbach³¹ and the aforementioned Gombrich.

There are older monographs as well, that approach textual allegory from a material, bodily perspective, written by authors who quite literally have an eye for the visual and, thus, for personification. It is no coincidence that all deal with late medieval and early modern examples of literary personification. One, of course, is C.S. Lewis.³² His understanding of allegory is principally visual: 'It is of the very nature of thought and language to represent what is immaterial in picturable terms'; allegory 'marries pairs of sensibles and insensibles, the fundamental equivalence between the material and the immaterial'.³³ Another is Rosemond Tuve.³⁴ She defines personification as 'a most natural form' of allegory.³⁵ Her conviction that 'great allegories are usually the most concrete of all writings in texture', and furthermore, that 'it is not only by temperament that Spenser became the painter of the poets',³⁶ confirms the visual orientation already evident from the title of her book.³⁷

The lack of attention to personification within studies of textual allegory may have something to do with the opinion—or charge—that the figure operates through characters who are seen to represent a concept merely through name, attributes, and *ekphrasis*. Because of their supposed lack of sophistication, they are deemed naive. But this assumption overlooks allegories such as *Piers Plowman*, wherein 'the allegorical and the mimetic constantly converge, and the trope which most characteristically effects that convergence is personification'.³⁸ Morton Bloomfield, one of the first to rehabilitate the literary study of personification, alludes to the fact that '[t]he personifier, like the cartoonist, throws his creativeness into what he has his figures *do*'.³⁹ In other

31 Auerbach E., "Figura", in idem, *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature*, Theory and History of Literature 9 (New York: 1959) 11–78. On Auerbach and allegory, see Tambling, *Allegory* 34–35.

32 Lewis C.S., *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition* (Oxford: 1936; reprint ed., New York: 1958).

33 Ibid. 44. Also see Bloomfield, "A Grammatical Approach" 168.

34 Tuve R., *Allegorical Imagery: Some Mediaeval Books and Their Posterity* (Princeton: 1966).

35 Ibid. 26.

36 Ibid. 29.

37 Another example is Susan Hagen's *Allegorical Remembrance: A Study of "The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man" as a Medieval Treatise on Seeing and Remembering* (Athens, GA – London: 1990).

38 Scanlon, "Personification and Penance" 22. Also see Wood S., *Conscience and the Composition of Piers Plowman* (Oxford: 2012) 6, n. 27.

39 Bloomfield, "A Grammatical Approach" 166 (*italics added*).

words: there is more life, more physical and psychological reality, more *mimesis* in personifications than we think.

In his concise introduction to allegory, Jeremy Tambling, too, allots personification a central position.⁴⁰ Its importance for constituting allegory literally comes to the fore, since many of his leads are taken from images and the study of art history.⁴¹ Thus, he treats personifications as material and real. Being real, they are more—or at least potentially more—than mere representations, signs, or signifiers, establishing fixed relations with some hidden meaning, value, or truth.⁴² As narrative, dramatic, or pictorial characters they develop a distinct reality, one that might not be identical with real or natural persons, but which oscillates between appearance and meaning.⁴³ They have a life of their own, carrying meaning within themselves, whereas allegory and *allegoresis* tend to pull one away from personification's materiality:

Where allegoresis draws attention to hidden or abstract meanings, and allegory stresses that the surface meaning is not the ultimate quarry of interpretation, personification emphasizes the face which appears, which is, by definition, the surface meaning. In this way, allegory and personification work, characteristically, in opposite modes.⁴⁴

Personification may also have suffered from the dismissal of allegory as merely conventional and mechanical, a charge made by the romantics, who opposed it to symbolism.⁴⁵ Its reestablished prominence within allegory theory may well be connected with Paul de Man's definition of *prosopopoeia* as 'the master

40 Tambling, *Allegory* 39–50.

41 Two other studies, like Paxson's dating from the mid-nineties, also take a more visual approach to allegory and include pictorial material in their analyses: Teskey G., *Allegory and Violence* (Ithaca, NY: 1996); and Kelley T.M., *Reinventing Allegory*, Cambridge Studies in Romanticism 22 (Cambridge: 1997). The latter has a chapter on "Allegorical Persons" (70–92).

42 Tambling, *Allegory* 42. His account of allegory leads him to criticize Erwin Panofsky's iconological method, even as he acknowledges, like others, the important contribution art historians, amongst them the afore-mentioned Gombrich, have made to both the understanding and appreciation of personification; see *ibid.* 40–42, 114–116, 171–172. Also see Paxson, *Poetics of Personification* 29–30, 107; and Baskins – Rosenthal, "Introduction", in *caedem* (eds.), *Early Modern Visual Allegory* 2–3.

43 Cramer T., "Allegorie und Zeitgeschichte. Thesen zur Begründung des Interesses an der Allegorie im Spätmittelalter", in Haug (ed.), *Formen und Funktionen* 265–276, esp. 272.

44 Tambling, *Allegory* 171.

45 *Ibid.* 80–81, 115–116, 128. Also see Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* 90–91.

trope of poetic discourse',⁴⁶ since all speaking and writing involves the anthropomorphization of reality—an echo of Lewis's quotation above and at the same time a prospective formulation of cognitive studies' current assertion that all our thinking is metaphorical and embodied.

To medieval and early modern audiences, moreover, the reality aspect of personification extended beyond that of being a material sign. Personifications *were* what they signified. As Johan Huizinga observes:

Was there any difference between the reality of the holy figures and the purely symbolic? [...] One may in all seriousness consider that Fortune and Faux-Semblant were just as alive as St. Barbara and St. Christopher. Let us not forget that one figure rose from free fantasy outside any dogmatic sanction and acquired a greater reality than any saint and survived them all: Death.⁴⁷

It seems that literary scholars over the last two decades have become much more aware of personification; they now tend 'to view personification not as a harbinger of allegory's weakness, but a central discursive resource and rhetorical goal'.⁴⁸ Two recent volumes of essays, *Thinking Allegory Otherwise* and *On Allegory*, give due consideration to visual allegory and personification.⁴⁹ Brenda Machosky, in particular, defines the mode as both verbal and visual: 'There is general agreement that the term allegory refers to a way of saying

46 Cited in Tambling, *Allegory* 140.

47 Huizinga J., *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*, trans. R.J. Payton – U. Mammitzsch (London: 1924; reprint ed., Chicago: 1996) 246. He makes comparable observations in *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture*, International Library of Sociology (London: 1944; reprint ed., London et al.: 1980) 139–140. Also see Gombrich, "Personification" 255. This aspect may also be gauged from the way personification was used to concretize positions and relations in medieval society, as expressed in law. See Fowler E., *Literary Character: The Human Figure in Early English Writing* (Ithaca, NY – London: 2003) 24–27. The 'quasi-independent, quasi-material existence' and other bodily aspects of personification in medieval texts, especially theatre, are succinctly treated in Cooper H., "The Afterlife of Personification", in Morse R. – Cooper H. – Holland P. (eds.), *Medieval Shakespeare: Past and Presents* (Cambridge: 2013) 98–116, esp. 104.

48 Scanlon R., "Personification and Penance", *The Yearbook of Langland Studies* 21 (2007) 1–29, here 10.

49 Machosky B. (ed.), *Thinking Allegory Otherwise* (Stanford: 2005); and Carr M. – Clarke K.P. – Nievergelt M. (eds.), *On Allegory: Some Medieval Aspects and Approaches* (Cambridge: 2008).

or *showing* one thing and meaning another'.⁵⁰ She defines the study of allegory as phenomenological, 'because it is a study of appearance, the way that phenomena appear by means of allegory. In allegory there is a phenomenologically simultaneous appearance of two things in the same image, in the same "space" at the same time';⁵¹ she thus devotes a whole chapter to "The Allegorical Image".⁵²

The currency of personification within modernist literary practice may be gauged from Marina Warner's analysis of female personifications of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: 'To lure, to delight, to appetize, to please, these [personifications] confer the power to persuade: as the spur to desire, as the excitement of the senses, as a weapon of delight'.⁵³ This is all true, of course, but at the same time—and herein lies one of the reasons for the importance of personification in the pre-modern period—allegory was construed as a method of conveying and impressing opinions and truths, as an authorizing vehicle for the dissemination of cultural values: 'Allegory flourishes at times of intense cultural disruption and reassessment. Not only the place of these texts within culture but the whole set of sociopolitical values that these texts are to justify and propound is what is really at issue'.⁵⁴ Personification was deemed intensely expressive of mental and bodily states, ranging from contemplative quietude to passionate tumult, and as such, it was considered one of the most effective, persuasive, and exigent of figurative devices.⁵⁵

Period Voices

The Jesuit pedagogue and master rhetorician Cyprien Soarez, S.J., provides a standard definition of personification or, more precisely, *prosopopoeia*, in the handbook he wrote for students enrolled at the order's schools and colleges, *De arte rhetorica libri tres, ex Aristotele, Cicerone, & Quintiliano praecipue deprompti* (Paris, Ex officina Thomas Brumen: 1565). His account usefully

50 Machosky B., *Structures of Appearing: Allegory and the Work of Literature* (New York: 2012) 1 (italics added).

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid. 28–63.

53 Warner M., *Monuments & Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form* (London: 1985; reprint ed., London: 1987) xx.

54 Madsen *Rereading Allegory* 135. Also see Tambling, *Allegory* 8–9.

55 Tambling, *Allegory* 10. Also see Edgecombe R.S., "Ways of Personifying", *Style* 31.1 (1997) 1–13, esp. 1–2; and Lyons J.D., "Meditation and the Inner Voice", in *New Literary History* 37.3 (2006) 525–538, esp. 527–528.

enumerates the characteristics of this rhetorical figure, which he classifies at the outset as a *figura sententiarum* ('figure of thought'), rather than *figura verborum* (figure of speech). The distinction proves crucial since figures of thought do not simply amplify words, as if painting them with ornaments, but rather, clarify the speaker's arguments by adorning them with *schemata* ('sensory images') that illuminate the thoughts he is formulating. These images set the matters under consideration in a clearer light, and as such, they belong to a higher species of ornament than mere *figurae verborum*:

The figure of thought consists not in words but in the dignity of things themselves, and for this reason such ornaments are greater [than figures of speech]. [...] The Greeks call those things that adorn oratory in the highest degree *schemata*: and this definition indicates that these images exercise their effect not by painting words but by illuminating thoughts: which is to say that they clarify most if not all thoughts by means of some mimetic image (*aliqua specie*).⁵⁶

Personification, as this formulation implies, operates by means of clarifying images that heighten the persuasive force of one's arguments. It visually enriches them by showing how they may be bodied forth. Specifically, personification involves the 'introduction of fictitious persons' whose emphatic presence intensifies what we say, by enacting how speech is bodily produced, and doing so, in a kind of *mise en abyme*, from within the very speech we ourselves are producing. This figure, when properly deployed, has the power to convince the auditor that he sees the orator's interlocutors addressing him, or sees them speaking with each other, or sees speakers foreign to him, even his enemies, conversing amongst themselves. It can even seem to raise the dead, giving them a voice:

Prosopopoeia is the introduction of fictitious persons (literally, the fictive introduction of persons), or again, a most weighty, intensifying

56 Soarez Cyprien, *De arte rhetorica libri tres, ex Aristotele, Cicerone, & Quintiliano praecipue deprompti* (Paris, Ex officina Thomas Brumen: 1565; reprint ed., Cologne, Apud Gosvinum Cholinum: 1591) 117–118: 'Est autem sententiarum exornatio, quae non in verbis, sed in ipsis rebus quandam habet dignitatem. Atque ea de caussa sententiarum ornamenta maiora sunt. [...] Schemata ea vocant Graeci, quae maxime ornent orationem: eaque ut definitio demonstrat, non tam in verbis pingendis pondus habent, quam in illuminandis sententijs. Nec aliud quicquam est dicere, nisi omnes, aut certe plerasque aliqua specie illuminare sententias'.

ornament: through it, we bring plausibly into our speeches the speeches of our adversaries, the speeches we conduct with other speakers, the speeches they address to each other, putting suitable persons forward for the purposes of exhortation, rebuke, complaint, praise, and commiseration. Indeed, this mode of speech is granted the power of bringing the dead back to life.⁵⁷

Personification, so construed, is both visual and verbal: it requires the orator to fashion a speaking likeness, that is, the image of another speaker, who is seen to speak approvingly or disapprovingly with the intention of moving someone else to action. The speaker within the speech, states Soares, can personify a group of people—the inhabitants of a city, a republic, or an entire country, for example—or embody an otherwise disembodied concept, such as rumor, pleasure, or moral virtue. But whomsoever or whatsoever the prosopopoeic image concretizes, if it fails to be affective or speaks ineloquently, then the fiction of personhood will appear implausible and meretricious:

Cities, too, and peoples receive a voice, and in this way, through them, the figure is made more agreeable. For example, if the fatherland, dearer to me than my very life, if all Italy, if the whole republic, were to speak with me, saying, ‘What is to be done, Marcus Tullius?’. [...] But [in this] a great measure of eloquence is desirable. For fictions, since they lack reality, being implausible by nature, must move us greatly if they are not to be thought truthless vanities. And moreover, we may oftentimes fashion images like Virgil’s Fame, Prodicus’s Vice and Virtue (as relayed by Xenophon), and the many such entities in Ovid. By means of *prosopopoeia*, bodily forms are devised for things devoid of bodies.⁵⁸

57 Ibid. 120–121: ‘Prosopopoeia est personarum ficta inductio, vel gravissimum lumen augendi: hac & adversariorum, & nostros cum alijs sermones, et aliorum inter se credibiliter introducimus: et suadendo, obiurgando, querendo, laudando, miserando personas idoneas damus. Quin mortuos excitare in hoc genere dicendi concessum est’.

58 Ibid. 121: ‘Urbes etiam, populique vocem accipiunt, in quibus hoc modo mollior fit figura. Etenim si mecum patria, qua mihi vita mea multo est charior, si cuncta Italia, si omnis republ[ica] sic loqueretur: M. Tulli quid agis? [...] Sed magna quaedam vis eloquentiae desideratur. Falsa enim & incredibilia natura necesse est aut magis moveant, quia supra vera sunt; aut pro vanis accipiantur, quia vera non sunt. Formas quoque fingimus saepe, ut famae Virgil, ut voluptatis ac virtutis (quemadmodum a Xenophonte traditur) Prodicus, ut multarum aliarum rerum Ovidius’. In margin: ‘Formae rerum, quae corporis expertes sunt, per Prosopoeiam finguntur’.

Personifications, in giving voice to arguments, convince us by speaking eloquently and movingly. More than this, their eloquence confers on them an evidentiary value, persuading us that Fame, Vice, Virtue, et alii are real, not merely factitious. Conversely, their status as living beings conduces to the credibility of the impassioned things they say.

Were these precepts implemented, and if so, how did they work in practice? The simple answer is yes, as perusal of Jesuit emblem books quickly confirms, although close inspection also reveals that the visual form of the personification—both how it looks and what it does—often becomes the primary source of the author's arguments. Eloquence operates as much visually as verbally, or is primarily effected by pictorial means. Take Emblem 45, "Mundus delirans, non sapit, quae Dei sunt" ("The crazy World fails to know the things that are God's"), in Jan David, *Veridicus Christianus* (*The True Christian*) (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1601) [Fig. 1]. The *Veridicus Christianus* consists of one hundred chapters, starting with Fear of the Lord and ending with the Four Last Things, that encompass the full range of topics—virtues, vices, God-given faculties of the body and the spirit, etc.—which any good Christian must constantly meditate, if he wishes to conduct his life virtuously and thereby achieve salvation. Each chapter centers on an emblem comprising the usual three parts—motto, picture, and epigrams (here, in Latin, Dutch, and French)—and incorporates an extensive exegetical commentary that closely attaches to the emblematic image. The engraver Theodoor Galle designed the pictures, working closely with David, and he and his workshop engraved the book's title-page and hundred plates, all of which are lettered to correlate with specific passages, likewise lettered, in the commentaries. Emblem 45 forms part of an extended discussion of the Eight Beatitudes, stretching over two chapters. The main protagonist, as the motto indicates, is *Mundus* ('The Terrestrial World'), whose character is discernible from her attributes (the crown in the form of an imperial orb, the ass-eared cowl draped around her neck, the mask, its eyeholes dark, covering her face, and, just behind her, the fool perched upon a column, who dangles an immense pair of scales) and actions (her downward gaze, earthbound pose, and topsy-turvy manipulation of the scales).

The epigrams focus on *Mundus's* actions and attitude:

Latin: 'Is it not the case that the World spurns these things as mere play-things. She raves, neither seeing what's true, nor judging what's just'.

Dutch: 'The World mocks such things, construing them as base and low.

The world's a fool who knows not what she says'.



FIGURE 1 Theodoor Galle, "Emblem 45: 'Mundus delirans, non sapit quae Dei sunt'". Jan David, s.j., *Veridicus Christianus* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1601). Engraving, 20 cm. (quarto). Chicago, The Newberry Library.

French: 'However much the race of men chases away this hateful voice. The World goes on wittering, and her foolish humor respects no laws'.⁵⁹

The things *Mundus* is seen to spurn are the eucharistic implements (missal and chalice) and *arma Christi* (scourge, whip, and cross, labeled B) in the pan at left, none of which she has any intention of grasping, as her open-handed gesture makes evident. Contrariwise, with her left hand she pushes down on the pan at right, signaling her preference for its 'weighty' and, in this sense, momentous contents (crown, scepter, goblet, die, coins, and moneybag, labeled D). The covetous demon emerging from hell's mouth to seize these items echoes *Mundus's* gesture of reaching and grasping, and thus impugns her delirious and injudicious choice of worldly things.

As will already be apparent, *Mundus's* identity, her persona, emanates from three types of symbolic attribute; first, conventional appurtenances, such as the orb that functions as a rebus of her name; second, novel hallmarks, such as the smiling mask with black disks for eyes, which adverts to her mocking temperament and spiritual blindness, and signifies her deceitful character, lack of discernment, and paucity of self-knowledge; third, her action of weighing falsely, the perverse nature of which is underscored by contrast with the humble Virgin (E) who, weighing her options wisely, humbly chose to be the mother of God, and, exalted by her humility, was ultimately assumed heavenward. Similarly, her action of pressing down is set against St. Michael's of bearing down upon Lucifer (F), whom he casts out of heaven. Finally, the foolishness of her actions finds its embodied parallel in the fool dressed like her in foolscap, who seems virtually to rise from her head; his gestures—raised right arm, lowered left—imitate hers (and hers his), and just as he stares down at the terrestrial orb, mocking it, so she mocks the sacred objects placed in the balance, idiotically rating them as trifling and of little weight. As we shall see, there are further visual ironies at play, the nature of which the commentary teases out.

The principal function of the commentary, however, is to give *Mundus* a voice: she speaks eloquently, if fatuously, and with conviction. David compares

59 David Jan, *Veridicus Christianus* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1601), *imago* 45:

'At nonne hos Mundus, mera ceu ludibria, spernit?

Delirat: nec vera vident: nec iudicat aequa'.

'De Weerelt houdt den spot, met sulck; als snoo, en slecht.

De Weerelt die is sot: s'en weet niet wat sy secht'.

'Toutefois la race / Du mondain rechasse / Et hait ceste voix.

Le Monde radotte / Et son humeur sotte / N'entend pas ces loix'.

her to a teacher of false precepts ('mundus docet') and distinguishes her in this respect from that greatest of teachers, God himself, as described by the Psalmist in *Psalm* 143:15: 'For that people who truly cherish God, holding him to be [their] Father and Lord, are more blessed in every way by far, since he entirely differs from the World, in the way he teaches his own'. *Psalm* 143:12–15, surprisingly, also provides the words *Mundus* is heard to enunciate. In effect, David allows the Psalmist to ventriloquize the World, ascribing to her the things said by 'the strange children whose mouth hath spoken vanity', as paraphrased in *Psalm* 143:12–15. But if she thus speaks forcefully and passionately in the Psalmist's voice, she does so without registering his minatory irony. She believes the things she reports: 'Their daughters decked out, adorned round about after the similitude of a temple: their storehouses full, flowing out of this into that: their sheep fruitful in young, abounding in their goings forth: their oxen fat. There is no breach of wall, nor passage, nor crying out in their street. They have called the people happy, that hath these things'.

David emphasizes that the things *Mundus* says precisely correlate to the things she does. How she looks is of a piece with how and what she speaks. She personifies the World as much in word as in deed, and her power to persuade flows from her embodied personhood, not just from her articulacy:

Wherefore the response [to the question posed in the first line of the epigram] states very aptly: 'The World's deranged'. In mocking the eight beatitudes, going so far as to declare them execrable, truly she knows not what she speaks, and she judges badly. For indeed, she call bad things good and good things bad, darkness light and light darkness, bitterness sweet and sweetness bitter. The pleasure of virtue she considers worthless, and even flees virtue as if it were burdensome and dolorous; the world's acidulous and toilsome delights she calls pleasurable and wonderingly commends; and thus she deceives her followers miserably.

For this reason, worldly vanity may be depicted in the likeness of a foolish woman who holds a balance, one part of which (the one containing virtues and good works) she elevates, as being of no importance, whereas the opposing part, wherein the world's vanities, pleasures, and allurements are set, she weighs down, her hand placed nearby, as if these were things of grave significance; and this she does in order to persuade foolish men that the latter are more advantageous than the former.⁶⁰

60 Ibid. 145: 'Quare optime dicit Responsio: *Mundus delirat*. Dum octo istas Beatitudines rident, immo ut infelicitates detestatur: nescit vere quid dicat; quia male iudicat. Dicit namque malum bonum, & bonum malum; tenebras lucem, & lucem tenebras; amarum dulce, & dulce amarum. Voluptatem virtutum nihili facit, immo ut tristitiam &

On this account, the types of symbolic attribute that identify *Mundus* as the personified World are also her chief instruments of persuasion, and the arguments they purvey are indistinguishable, in effect if not form, from the visual traits that confer on her the quality of personhood.

David's commentary elaborates upon the eloquence of this personification by calling attention to other ways in which her appearance and actions—how she looks and what she is seen to do—correspond to what she has been heard to say foolishly and enticingly in the words of *Psalm* 143. He implicitly draws a parallel between her darkly masked eyes as indices of blind ignorance ('per opacam enim crassae tuae ignorantiae caliginem') and her inability to observe the foolishness of her actions ('interim stulta non animadvertit') or recognize how different they are from God's, who exalts by humbling, humbles to exalt ('non recogitant enim mundus, Deum contrariae esse sententiae [...] ut qui humiles exaltet, & se exaltantes humiliet').⁶¹ In preferring trifles and trumperies, she elevates them as high as the fool perched upon the column behind her ('crepundis interim aliisque reculis in caelum sublatis'). Just as David compares these trifles to children's rattles ('crepudiis'), so Galle makes the orb of the world, its cross greatly lengthened, resemble such a toy. The fool appears grafted to *Mundus*'s head because the 'person of the world is aggregated from the impure detritus of common men'.⁶² Heavyset, her feet firmly planted on the ground, her head lowered, *Mundus* lowers the balance to indicate her love of terrestrial *voluptates*. She is as earthbound as the multitude in *Matthew* 5, who, refusing to climb the mountain with Christ and the apostles, failed to hear him preach the sermon on the beatitudes: 'For mundane men do not seek what is truly spiritual and celestial, even if they follow Christ at a distance and rejoice in the appellation Christian. Inconstant, they remain attached to earthly things, whereas Christ climbs ever higher. [...] They are solely affected by those things that anchor them fixedly to earth'.⁶³ Indeed, so distant is *Mundus*

amarulentiam refugit; acerbam interim & laboriosam mundi oblectationem amoenitatem vocat, & mire commendat; suosque ita sectatores misere decipit.

Ideoque instar stultae mulieris depingi potest mundi vanitas; quae bilancem habeat, cuius partem unam (in qua, quae virtutum & piorum operum sunt, continentur) admota manu elevat ut nullius momenti, partem vero oppositam, ubi vanitates, voluptates, & illecebrae mundi repositae, tanquam gravia, magnique ponderis deorsum premit; ut haec prioribus illis maioris esse praemij stultis persuadeat.

61 Ibid.

62 Ibid. 146: 'Ita communiter, faex hominum vulgarium, ex quorum colluvie mundi persona conflatur, planis, facilibus, commodis, terrenis, coenosis, & corporeis gaudent'.

63 Ibid.: 'Non enim quaerunt mundani homines, tametsi a longe Christum sequantur, & Christiani nomine gaudeant, ea quae vere spiritualia ac caelestia sunt. In inferioribus

from Christ that she remains oblivious to a key irony: in raising up what she purports to deprecate, *Mundus* is inadvertently imitating Christ, literally lifting sacred things heavenward (the chalice, missal, and *arma Christi*), while lowering hellward the worldly paraphernalia she so patently adores. Blind to the Christian values she unwittingly enacts, she epitomizes the failure to read the true meaning of one's actions: incapable of discerning what she truly represents, she can be said to personify the inability to read personification itself, to uncover its latencies and and decode its apparencies:

And meanwhile, being foolish, she does not notice that in elevating good things, she brings them closer to heaven, and nor that by lowering vain and perverse things, she situates them closer to hell, where they belong. [...] O foolish World! How little you attend to what you speak! [...] Whatever extends beyond the limits of your carnal wisdom, whatever is beyond you, beyond the tip of your nose, so to speak, is that which you neither know nor judge anyway to be good. Yes, indeed, whatever is redolent of virtue and the spirit, on your own behalf, with your eyes, smell, and taste you suffer, to the very bottom of your heart. No wonder, then, if you now judge and speak so rashly, foolishly, and contrarily about this heavenly doctrine, this divine philosophy of the eight beatitudes.⁶⁴

David, in this passage, once again elides words and deeds, image and speech, appearance and argument, insisting that the figure of personification operates both visually and verbally, bodying forth and articulating in equal measure.

It bears repeating that David's self-reflexive exposition of the personification *Mundus* occurs in a Jesuit emblem book. The emblematic context requires the reader-viewer to attend closely to the relation between visual and verbal modes of signification, as he sets about the task of interpreting figurative words and images and parsing how they are conjoined. Emblems were therefore an

infirmiores, Christo in altiora ascendente, remanebant. [...] Illa sola afficiunt, illa eos humi defixos tenent'.

64 Ibid. 145–146: 'Et interim stulta non animadvertit, se bona elevando, caelo propinquiora facere; vana vero & prava deprimendo, tanquam quae magni momenti sint, inferno reddere viciniora, ut vere sunt. [...] O mundi stultitiam! quam parum quid dicas attendis! [...] Quod extra carnalis tuae sapientiae limites est positum, quodque supra te est, id est, ultra narium tuarum peripheriam vel horizontem, non id sapis, neque id ullo tibi modo probatur: immo etiam quoad eiusmodi quae virtutem & spiritum redolent, in propria causa oculis, olfactu, ac gustu laboras, usque ad imum cordis tui fundum. Quid mirum igitur, si de sublimi hac, caelesti, ac divina doctrina atque octo Beatitudinum Philosophia, tam temere, tam stulte, & tam contrario plane modo iudicas & loqueris?'

ideal breeding ground for personifications, as also for the theoretical examination of this figure, which generally takes the form of a speaking likeness and, as such, conveys arguments both bodily and verbally, in word and image. There were other contexts as well that fostered interrogation of the figure—the *spelen van sinne* (allegorical plays) of the Dutch and Flemish *rederijerskamers* (chambers of rhetoric), for example, and treatises on art, such as Karel van Mander's foundational *Schilder-Boeck* (*Book on Picturing*) (Haarlem, Paschier van Wesbusch: 1604). Book VI of the *Schilder-Boeck*, the “Wtbeeldinge der figueren” (“Portrayal of Figures”), printed for Van Wesbusch by Jacob de Meester, contains a short disquisition on personification, which forms part of the discussion of poetic devises and hieroglyphs.

Van Mander's notion of what constitutes a personification—*sin-gevend beeld* (‘sense-bearing image’)—and how it communicates with the beholder is quite different from Jan David's. He implicitly differentiates between rhetorical and pictorial usage of this *figura*, most obviously by ‘silencing’ his *sin-ghevende beelden*, who now purvey their messages purely visually, viz., pictorially.⁶⁵ They form part of Van Mander's attempt throughout the *Schilder-Boeck* to demarcate a space for *schilderconst*, in which it or, better, she proves more eloquent than any other *const*, the literary arts included. He spells this out at the start of “Wtbeeldinge: Het derde boeck”: ‘In the preceding, I have to some extent opened the way for my sons of *schilderconst*, showing them how to represent without letters a certain sense or meaning, in such a way that it may be decoded or understood by people versed in any language, so long as they are clever and well-practised’.⁶⁶ He then gives some examples of ‘how to write without letters, with drawings or figural images, in the manner of the rhetoricians, who are wont thus to tender their poems or devices’.⁶⁷ Van Mander has in mind the *blazoenen* (blazons) of the chambers of rhetoric, as well as the prevalence

65 Mander Karel van, “Wtbeeldinge der figueren: waer in te sien is, hoe d'Heydenen hun Goden uytghebeeldt, en onderscheyden hebben: hoe d'Egyptische yet beteyckenden met Dieren of anders, en eenighe meeninghen te kennen gaven, met noch meer omstandicheden”, in idem, *Het Schilder-Boeck, waer in voor eerst de leerlustighe Ieught den grondt der Edel Vry Schilderconst in verschedyen deelen wort voorghedraghen* [...] (Haarlem, Paschier van Wesbusch: 1604), fol. 135r: ‘[...] ben ick wel lustich eenighe voorbeelden der gheraemde beduydselen, of sin-gheven gedaenten der beeldinghen voor te stellen [...]’.

66 Ibid.: ‘In dit voorige heb ick nu mijn Schilder-jeught eenighsins den wegh gheopent, om sonder letteren eenighen sin oft meeninge voor te stellen, met beduydingen, die alle volcken in eyghen spraek, so sy doch vernuftigh, oft yet ervaren zijn, soudon connen raden, en verstaen’.

67 Ibid.: ‘[...] die wijze van sonder letteren te schrijven, met teecken en oft figueren, ghelijck de Rethorijckers eenighe devijsen oft ghedichten pleghen uyt te stellen [...]’.

of personifications in their *gedichten* ('poems') and plays. When they rely on visual figures such as these, they are comparable to *schilders*, for they become for all intents and purposes practitioners of *schilderconst*.

Van Mander then qualifies his remarks: devices and poems laden with symbolic images, though they may seem to resemble Egyptian hieroglyphs, belong to a different order of signification, in his view. This is because they operate like rebuses, each device or symbol calling up a word, phrase, or clause, whereas hieroglyphs, more than mere proxies for spoken or written language, were themselves a visual language *sonder letteren*, cognized visually not verbally: 'Common folk admiringly behold this manner of writing without letters, [...] which [devices and poems], even though they are neither read nor understood like [written] language, are not so fine as the ancient Egyptian method of [composing] hieroglyphs or fashioning images'.⁶⁸ An example of this modern pseudo-hieroglyphic method is the allegorical representation of the continuous sequence 'peace begets industry, industry wealth, wealth pride, pride discord, discord war, war poverty, poverty humility, humility peace': 'Firstly, for peace one may put forward the caduceus, or a helmet in the form of a beehive, or an olive branch. Industry can take the form of a ploughshare, ship's rudder, hammer, trouwel, spool, and other useful utensils of this sort: this may be placed atop the beehive helm or other peace symbols, to show that peace bears or produces industry. Above industry one may represent wealth by means of a merchant's purse, etc.'⁶⁹ Each object is a metonym for the concept signified, and the heaping up of objects signifies the verbal action of 'bearing' or 'producing'.

Van Mander now turns to *sin-ghevende beelden*, which he clearly demarcates from the metonymic pseudo-hieroglyphs: their symbolic identity emerges from the relation between the many symbolic objects they carry and their method of mobilizing them. Although the type of action they perform is relatively fixed, their appearance is otherwise variable, since they can be depicted

68 Ibid.: 'Het worden wel veel met verwonderen by den ghemeenen volcke ghesien, [...] welcke dinghen alsoose niet als in een spraec ghelesen, oft verstaen en worden, en zijn soo uytnemende niet, als de oude Egyptysche wijze der Hieroglyphicken, oft uytbeeldingen'.

69 Ibid. fol. 135r-v: 'Vrede brengt neeringe, neeringe rijkdom, rijkdom hooghmoet, hooghmoet twist, twist krijgh, krijgh armoede, armoede ootmoet, ootmoet brengt vrede. [...] Eerstlijck, voor den Vrede machmen stellen *Mercurij* roede, oft eenen Helm tot Biekorf, oft eenen Olijftack. Neeringe machmen uytbeelden met ploegh-kouter, schip-roer, hamer, truffel, spoel, en sulck noodighste tuygh: dit machmen op den voorseyden Biekorfischen Helm, oft ander vrede-teycken stellen, tot bewijs, dat Vrede neeringhe voortbrengt oft draeght. Boven de neeringhe machmen maken rijkdom, met een stockbeurs uytgebeeldt, etc.'

with one or another object, or several objects together. For instance, Peace, or Concord (*Vrede, oft Eendracht*) appears as a woman crowned with olive, laurel, or a wreath of roses, and holding grains of wheat in her hand, or alternatively, a pitcher in the right hand, a cornucopia in the left, or yet again, the *fascies* or a wrencher (a tool used by ropemakers to twist rope); she proffers these objects, as if gifting them to the beholder.⁷⁰ None of these objects, in and of itself, signifies peace, nor does the woman on her own embody concord; rather, the confluence of person and things, how she interacts with or manipulates them, is constitutive of the figure's significance, which is to say, of her identity. And precisely because identity and embodied meaning are inextricably linked, this meaning will be tinged with feeling and motivation, animated by an implied psychology of soul. The same is true of the next personification, Fidelity (*Trouw*), whom the ancients dressed in white, in allusion to the fidelity of elderly (that is, grey-haired) couples. He or she (Van Mander is not explicit about this figure's gender) is often shown raising the right arm in an open-handed gesture that was commonly interpreted as a peace-offering, and he or she sometimes also displays a staff topped with clasped hands.⁷¹

Whereas Peace and Fidelity speak not a word, communicating their meaning solely by visual means, on the model of the ancients, Friendship (*Vriendtschap*), is occasionally shown pointing at the words 'life and death' ('leven en doot') or 'far and near' ('verre en by') written upon her breast, to avow that neither time nor space can compromise friendship.⁷² This is a practice Van Mander deprecates: '[...] but indeed, I should prefer that she point at no text'.⁷³ Instead, young in age, dressed in a robe of rough fabric, her head bare, she should simply point at her heart, thus to signify that she candidly conveys her true intentions, never concealing them from friends. Her youth declares that true friendship remains ever fresh; her bare head attests that she is never ashamed to reveal herself as a friend; her rough robe indicates that friendship is undeterred by adversity. These attributes are metaphors for affective actions whereby friendship makes itself felt and also visibly discernible.

The final three personifications marshaled by Van Mander—Fortune (*Avontuer*), Occasion (*Oorsaeck*), and Good Favor (*Ionste*)—are very similar in the motions they enact: all three speed along, their movements sudden and

70 Van Mander, "Van Vrede, oft Eendracht", in *ibid.* fols. 135v–136r.

71 Van Mander, "Van de Trouw", in *ibid.* fol. 136r.

72 Van Mander, "Van de Vriendtschap", in *ibid.*: '[...] in welcks boort was gheschreven, leven en doot [...] en toonde met eenen vinger haer herte, waer op was geschreven, verre en by [...]']

73 *Ibid.*: 'doch watmen sonder schrift con doen, soud' ick beter achten'.

unstable, but neverending. In other respects, however, their appearance varies greatly. Fortune is pictured riding a round stone or turning a wheel up which some men climb, down which others fall. She can wear the imperial orb like a crown; her hands and feet may be winged; she can hold an adze, a rudder, or a cornucopia; and she may appear as transparent and brittle as glass.⁷⁴ Occasion is painted in the ancient Roman manner, as a woman (or, now and again, a child), one foot perched on a spinning wheel, hair covering her face, the back of her head bald, to signify that opportunity often flies past, unrecognized, and once gone, may no longer be grasped.⁷⁵ Finally, Good Favor appears in the guise of a 'blind child' ('blint kindt'), the form given her by the ancient painter Apelles.⁷⁶ Her wings indicate that Favor flies whithersoever the wind blows. One foot perches on a wheel to show how unsteady is the path she and her followers tread. She is blind because the fortunate are often oblivious to the unfortunate, and she is puffed up to expose her lack of self-knowledge. Personified around Favor are a retinue of her ill effects: Self-Adulation (*Pluymstrijckerie*) staring at herself in a mirror, followed by Envy (*Nijdicheyte*), and then Riches (*Rijckdommen*), Sensual Pleasures (*Behaginghen*), and Striving after Vice (*Ondeughts Bedrijf*).⁷⁷ Van Mander has Apelles speak in dialogue with a Poet (*Poeet*), who asks the painter to justify Good Favor's peculiar appearance, but Favor herself, like Fortune and Occasion, refrains from speech.⁷⁸ It is left to the viewer to discern why she looks the way she does, in emulation of Apelles and the Poet, who interpret the pictured personifications by looking attentively at the coalescence of action, attribute, and circumstance. For Van Mander, then, personification has the power to make us speak, but it exercises this power silently, through the sheer force of visual eloquence. Construed as a purely pictorial exercise, personification need not involve, as it did for Soares and David, giving one's 'sin-ghewende beelden' a speaking voice. To make this point as clear as possible, Van Mander himself demurs from writing at length about this species of *uytbeeldinghe*. Rather, he yields pride of place to the 'sons

74 Van Mander, "Van d'Avontuer", in *ibid.*

75 Van Mander, "Van de Oorsaek", in *ibid.* fol. 136r-v.

76 Van Mander, "Van de Ionste", in *ibid.* fol. 136v: 'De Schilderije van de Ionste, en was soo heel niet onghelijck die van der Oorsake, en was gebeeldet met een jongh blint kindt'.

77 *Ibid.*

78 *Ibid.*: 'van welcke een Poeet sprekende, wendt hem tot *Apellem* den Schilder, segghende: *Den Poeet.*

Apelles, seght my doch, wat Vrouwe ist die ick sie

By Ionste altijt? en blijft ghestadich aen haer sie?

Apelles.

Dat is pluymstrijckerie. Etc.'

of *schilderconst'*, whose task it is, freely to devise and depict such *beelden*, in images not words:

Before I finish, it behooves me to produce a few *sin-gevende beelden*, with regard to which more than enough is known: for example, how to represent the seven Virtues or Vices, the Four Elements, the Four Seasons, the Twelve Months, and so forth. Here I have neither the time nor inclination fully to describe them one by one, and I leave it to each [*schilder*] freely to devise what he will, helping himself to what has already been said. [...] With this figure of Good Favor I adjure Art-Loving Youth to bring many more such figures to pass, inventing them from their storehouse of memory. [...] I could have said much more here, but it will suffice to have roused others to add [what they may] and bring various things to light.⁷⁹

Soarez, David, and Van Mander give some sense of the wide spectrum of approaches to personification: howsoever variously it is construed, personification is consistently endorsed as a rhetorical and/or pictorial instrument pre-eminently capable of embodying meaning and emotion by means of images. The essays collected in this volume explore some of the many forms this presumption took in late medieval and early-modern European art and literature.

Cognitive Perspectives on Personification

The volume starts with a chapter by Jean Bochorova, who asks 'what [...] modern neuropsychological insights about human cognition tell us about the nature of personification in poetry and art?'. Drawing on insights from various

79 Ibid. fols. 135v–136v: 'Eer ick noch eyndighe, behoef ick wel eenighe ander uytbeeldinghe voort te stellen, aengaende de sin-ghevende beelden, waer van veel dingen genoech gemeen zijn: als, hoe men de seven Deughden uytbeeldt, oock d'ondeughden, vier Elementen, vier Tijden, 12. Maenden, en dergelijcke. Hier heb ick geen en moedt, noch oock tijt, yeder te voldoen, latende elck vry te versieren, en hem te behelpen, met t'ghene voorhenen van my verhaelt is. [...]

Met dese Ionste wil ick den Ionstighen Const-lievenden bevelen, veel ander uytbeeldinghen te weghe te brenghen, en voort uyt zijnen eygenen gheest te versieren [...]. Daer waren veel ander dinghen sonder eyndt wel meer by te brenghen: Dan t'sal ghenoech wesen, om een ander te verwecken, hier meer by te voeghen, oft verscheyden vindinghen aen den dagh te brenghen'.

fields and disciplines, she puts together a sample catalogue of cognitive principles that lie at the basis of personification and allegorical representation in general. We are guided through the world of aesthetic universals, and are made familiar with the theory of structured Connectionism, to which we owe the insight 'that metaphorical thinking is at the heart of all human cognition and that to study metaphor is to study truth as we are able to comprehend it'. This is why, in Bocharova's view, personification allegory was so widely applied in pre-modern art and literature. Allegorical theatre, for example, visualized so-called primary metaphors: causes (for forces), motions (for changes), locations (for states). Bocharova takes her examples from Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, demonstrating that the way we understand (or perceive, or experience) the concept of despair in this text 'is just as strongly influenced by the poetry and imagery in the first half of the scene as it is by the explicit theological arguments that follow'.

Personification and the Critical Tradition

Three authors deal with personification as it appears in three epitomes of late medieval and early-modern allegorical writing. They apply to the personified characters in these texts critical-hermeneutical concepts taken from literary and cultural studies. Jeremy Tambling aims to show how the portrayal of St. Francis in Dante's *Divina Comedia* amounts to an affective form of personification, his life becoming a living web of spiritual references. Following in the steps of Erich Auerbach and building on insights from Friedrich Nietzsche and Walter Benjamin, Tambling argues that 'personifications in Dante imply people at the height of their individualism, but still in process of becoming different'. It is in Dante's seemingly positivist, biographical narrative of Francis's life, put in the mouth of St. Thomas Aquinas, that he discovers a series of 'similes and images which double themselves'. Besides Francis's Christ-likeness, his imitation, even emulation of Christ—after all, whereas Christ bore the stigmata in death, Francis carried them in life—there is his marriage to Poverty, whose nakedness is covered by nothing but a translucent loincloth, 'a veil which is the very symbol of allegory'. Dante's text, argues Tambling, itself functions as a veil hiding Francis's life. Although the radiance of the life shines through, its factual content or, better, facticity can never fully be captured, since it is filtered by allegory.

Any volume on early modern personification should perforce include a chapter on William Langland's *Piers Plowman*. From amongst its many

personifications, William Rhodes chooses that of Hunger to demonstrate 'how personification can embody that which acts on people's bodies'. In his analysis, he employs Michel Foucault's concept of biopolitics, that is, 'of power's hold over life', in this case the lives and bodies of the medieval rural populace, how they were fed and disciplined. Intriguingly, Hunger and other personifications of material conditions closely interact with personifications of more abstract, spiritual matters. This reveals the close connection drawn in *Piers Plowman* between body, mind, and soul. Personification allegory enabled Langland to make his audience imaginatively see and feel the effect hunger has on bodies, by graphically describing how Hunger beats the life out of the Waster and his mate Breton. The social criticism inherent in *Piers Plowman* exerted a strong attraction on its sixteenth-century editor, Robert Crowley, whose *Philargyrie of Greate Britayne* exemplifies in a comparable way how the voracious giant Philargyrie—a personification of the greed of the ruling classes—preys on the rural populace.

Posthumously published in 1609, the final version of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* contains a seventeenth book, which includes *Two Cantos of Mutabilitie*, recounting 'the Titaness Mutability's ascent to the heavens'. Brenda Machosky investigates the meaning and function of 'this final personification of Elizabeth'. She utilizes Ernst Kantorowicz's theory of the king's two bodies (amongst others) to explain the evolution of figured Elizabeths, including Gloriana, personifying her body politic, and Belpheobe, signifying her body natural. The poem itself may be seen as an attempt by Spenser to achieve a perpetual unity of these two bodies. Mutability is a special case indeed, since she, too, figures *both* Elizabeth's mortal and immortal aspects. However, as a Titaness, she belongs to a defeated godly lineage, and is therefore finite, like Elizabeth (and the poet, for that matter, who created her towards the end of his life and that of the queen). One could say that Mutability 'defaces [...] not only the figure of the Faerie Queene but the poem itself as personification of the realm'. Thus, at the end of his poem Spenser can be seen to de-construct personification: in a way, he undoes it.

Personification and the Modalities of Figuration

Jean Campbell asks how personification—construed as a rhetorical procedure that lends face and voice to a distant or absent entity—operates together with apostrophe—the complementary procedure that posits such an entity as an object of address—to constitute the mimetically dynamic image of the

Virgin Annunciate in Pisanello's *Annunciation* from the *Brenzoni Monument* in San Fermo Maggiore, Verona. The Marian protagonist who emerges from the imagined conversation made possible by these rhetorical figures, is experienced as a liminal creature: iconic and yet historical, biblical and also extra-biblical, she stands proxy for the incontrovertible mystery of the Incarnation even while functioning as a fictional construct indexically linked to the painter's *ingenium*. Personification is thus a crucially generative component of the painter's *ars poetica*; moreover, it forms part of the arsenal of paratactic and meta-pictorial devices that allow Pisanello to call attention to the 'persistent effects of the Incarnation'.

James Clifton examines a specific allegorical lineage centering on the personification of Truth: inaugurated by Willem and Godevaard van Haecht's *Triumphus Veritatis* of 1579, the sequence consists of five engraved variants issued by various publishers in Antwerp, Frankfurt, and elsewhere between 1581 and 1614. Conceived and published by the Van Haechs, who collaborated with the draftsman Maarten de Vos and the engraver Jan Wierix, the *Triumphus Veritatis* features a female personification of the Truth of Christ or, alternatively, a personification that bodies forth the presence of Christ, second person of the Holy Trinity, as Truth. Although the figure of Truth is Christological rather than explicitly confessional, the addition of corollary elements, such as ancillary personifications, attributes, or inscriptions, could be used to inflect the political meaning of *Veritas*, converting her into the embodiment of Roman Catholic or Reformed Truth, or alternatively, stripping her of any discernible confessional alignments. The popularity of the *Triumphus Veritatis* derived, as Clifton suggests, from the functional malleability of the type of personification favored by the Van Haechs.

Ralph Dekoninck contextualizes personification within the modalities of figuration licensed by mystical theology, as set forth by Maximilianus Sandaeus in his treatises, *Theologia mystica* (1627) and *Pro Theologia Mystica clavis* (1640), and illustrated in the engraved series *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (1680s). Just as Sandaeus distinguishes between symbolic and mystical images, arguing that the former operate allegorically by means of metaphor, the latter indexically by means of metonym, so in the *Idea*, the spiritual ascent of the Carmelite votary—her/his mystical *cursus*—is described by what Dekoninck aptly characterizes as a gradual refusal of analogy, a 'break with metaphoricity'. The shift from metaphor to metonym, from a symbolic to an embodied mode of representation, from the register of allegory to that of mystical experience, transforms rather than eliminates the figure of personification, in ways that blur the boundary between allusive

figuration and descriptive exemplification. In a startling paradox, the mystical *modus loquendi* relies upon personification to declare that the nature of God is unfigurable.

Personification on Stage: Forces of Living Presence

The communicative possibilities of theatrical personifications become even more evident within the context of public pageantry, when messages had to be understood quickly and directly to prevent their getting lost in the hustle and bustle of a community event. Katell Lavéant traces the representation of two concepts—time and the printing press—within parades and comic plays, so-called *sotties*, performed by ‘joyful companies’ of the Lyon trade guilds in the period 1566–1610. Personifications of the former were Present Times (*Temps Présent*), Good Times (*Bon Temps*), and Past Times (*Temps Passé*); the personification of the latter was Lady Printing Press (*Dame Imprimerie*), who came to be identified with the newly-created muse Typosine (Lyon was a major European printing centre). On the basis of both archival evidence and play texts, Lavéant demonstrates how these personifications functioned as ‘high-density’ conveyors of meaning, with great ‘evocative power for the audience’. Even when they are not personified or impersonated, they remain virtually present, for other stage characters refer to them. Their continuous popularity in parades and *sotties*—like the continued popularity of these originally medieval genres themselves—gives evidence of the great communicative need to which they answered.

However versatile dramatic personification may have been, it had its representational limitations. In any case, as Greg Walker argues, Sir David Lyndsay in *A Satire of the Three Estates* ‘explores the limitations of personification allegory as a vehicle for exploring social and political issues’. Walker draws his insights partly from the staging of the full play on the grounds of Linlithgow Palace, Scotland, in June 2013. Whereas the first half consists of a traditional morality play with a host of personifications surrounding the central protagonist, Rex Humanitas, the second half features real-life characters. ‘Lyndsay’s desire to rid the world of middle men and intermediaries seems to find its dramaturgical equivalent’, observes Walker, in the replacement of personifications by figures taken from the street. This phenomenon takes place literally when a character such as Pauper leaves the audience and clambers onto stage during the interval between the play’s two halves: Pauper is liminal—of the people and yet of the stage. King James V, before whom the play was performed, was not indifferent to the social suffering exemplified by Pauper. However, though

realistically portrayed—Pauper makes a convincing working class hero—he never ceases to signify his class as a whole, and thus stays firmly within the scope of personification.

Alisa van de Haar asks why the late-sixteenth-century *rederijker* (rhetorician) and schoolmaster Peeter Heyns includes so many personifications in the plays he wrote for the girls enrolled in his French school in Antwerp. Heyns was familiar with both Neo-Latin school drama and the classically inspired innovations advocated by playwrights associated with the French Pléiade. Thus, he chose biblical subject matter for his plays, which are carefully subdivided into five acts. However, whereas it was normal procedure that they be written in French, the inclusion of so many personifications—more than two thirds of his *dramatis personae*—seems at odds with the standard scholarly opinion that true humanist or Renaissance drama should be populated by realistic, flesh-and-blood characters. Van de Haar demonstrates how Heyns's personifications were able to express general, abstract ideas and look and behave realistically at the same time. This mixed usage created opportunities for both emotional engagement and learning: and not just for the girls watching, but for their actress-schoolmates as well. The trope of personification, whether applied in print, theatre, or poetry, served humanist educational purposes perfectly. Its effects on stage even extended into the realm of the printed play text, personifications on paper being easily evoked for the mind's eye.

Bart Ramakers deals with personification in the genre of the *spel van zinne* (or *zinnespel*), the Netherlandish version of the morality play, which dominated serious drama in the sixteenth-century Low Countries. He analyzes the stage presence of Lady World, which in all its aspects—attire, movement, mimicry, gesture, and speech—tends toward the dense expression, in one or a series of memorable images or scenes, of falsity and sin. She generally appears as the antagonist in a cosmic battle between good and evil, the ultimate originators of which—God and Satan—often take part in the play's action, as also do the representations of vice—the Vices—who second her as servants in scenes of enthronement, banquet, dispute, or battle. Many of the dramatized extended metaphors comprised by the patterns of allegorical action, find their origin in Scripture: in the single Pauline metaphor of the Christian Knight or in elements taken from that most allegorical of biblical books—the *Apocalypse* of St. John. The correspondences between these plays and allegorical prints attest to the rhetoricians' ambition—and apparent ability—to body forth fundamental truths and to claim a position in public moral and religious discourse.

Often deemed Shakespeare's least loved play, *The Life of Timon of Athens* opens with an intriguing scene featuring a Painter and a Poet who engage in

a dramatized *paragone*, a debate on the superiority of either art. Jennifer A. Royston shows how in Shakespeare's opinion, drama, by combining word and image, was able to partake of the best of both painting and poetry. She contextualizes the prefatory scene by discussing the views of three (near) contemporary authors who aimed to discriminate between the two arts. However, as she demonstrates, there is always something of the one in the other. It therefore seems that the *paragone* represents a false dilemma. Dramatic personification proves capable of exemplifying the mixed character of poetry and painting, of operating simultaneously in the registers of the verbal and the visual. In *Timon of Athens*, the Painter and the Poet, through the products of their respective arts—a painting and a poem—attempt to represent the play's namesake, whom the audience has not yet seen. Their mutual description and discussion of Timon's portrayal in one another's art culminates in the confrontation with the object of representation himself: do portrait and poem equally catch his personality?

Jesuit Approaches to Personification

The Jesuits, as indicated above, were enthusiastic proponents of prosopopoeic usage, having affirmed the figure's affective value and persuasive potential in their rhetorical manuals, and utilized it intensively in their sermons, school plays, emblem books, and meditative treatises. Walter Melion explores the form, function, and meaning of *prosopopoeia* in one of the order's foundational emblem books, Jan David's *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* (1605), which centers on the exploits of a prosopopoeic protagonist, Occasion, and constitutes a meta-allegory about the nature of this rhetorical figure and its status as a divinely sanctioned instrument of cognitive and spiritual transformation. The *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*, as Melion emphasizes, is a new kind of emblem book, consisting of three distinct subsections—the school play “Occasio, drama”, twelve pictorial *schemata* (emblematic images), and twelve chapters of exegetical commentary—that variously participate in the task at hand: the conversion of the pagan goddess *Occasio*, winged, changeable, and inexorable, into her ethical counterpart, Christian *Opportunitas* (Opportunity), who is identified as the occasion of virtue seized (*arrepta*) or shirked (*neglecta*) by respectively virtuous or vicious individuals. The movement through the book's three parts is marked by a change in the ontological status of personifications such as *Occasio* and *Tempus*, who initially resemble the embodied virtues and *sinnekens* (embodied vices) that populate *spelen van sinne*, allegorical plays staged by local chambers of rhetoric, but then become increasingly life-

like, behaving more like actual *personae* than fictional *sinnekens*, and finally, assume the role of hermeneutic guides who encourage the reader-viewer more fully to engage in the process of scriptural interpretation. Passage through the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* might therefore be described in terms of a phased transition from personification as allegory to personification as an instrument of *allegoresis*.

The Jesuit personifications discussed by Gwendoline de Mûelenaere—noetic and encomiastic embodiments of academic disciplines and virtues, associated with *promovendi* and their patrons—demonstrate a similar malleability of manner and meaning. Designed to embellish the broadsides and booklets circulated at thesis defenses, these allegorical figures are composite and polysemous: they affirm the student's knowledge of his field, as well as the erudition of his teachers; simultaneously, they proclaim that this knowledge is not merely facultative but also practical and beneficial, both socially and politically (the relation between geometry and military engineering, optics and ballistics, for example); and finally, they also celebrate the virtues exemplified by the student's patron, virtues that are themselves dichotomous—prudence in war and peace, justice dispensed legally and on the battlefield—and to which the student is seen to aspire. This multiplicity of functions and meanings goes hand in hand, as De Mûelenaere points out, with the mixed character of thesis-print personifications that are part 'mythological exemplum, part virtuous embodiment', and part representative of one or more academic disciplines and their practical applications.

The analogical approach to figuration displayed by Johannes Vermeer in the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* (1671–1672), as Aneta Georgievska-Shine makes clear, derives from Jesuit image theory and, specifically, from the types of *imagines figuratae* codified in such meditative treatises, manuals, and emblem books as Jerónimo Nadal's *Evangelicae historiae imagines* (1593) and Guilielmus Hesius's *Emblemata de Fide, Spe, Charitate* (1633). Whereas the majority of Vermeer's pictures elide the distinction between the verisimilar and the allegorical, the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* highlights the tension between the 'domestic habitus' and 'blatantly symbolic content' of its central protagonist, the woman who personifies Faith and concurrently embodies two *personae*, that of Mary Magdalene at the moment of her conversion and that of the Virgin Mary as the epitome of resolute faith. Faith personified also functions as a placeholder for the beholder whom the *Allegory* prompts to shore up his faith by embarking on a meditative *ductus* ('itinerary') respectively demarcated by the terrestrial and celestial globes below and above. This *ductus* transits through the figure of Faith, who thus personifies the spiritual process or, better, exercise that this pictorial *machina* ('apparatus') is designed to engender.

Personifying Charity

Three essays focus on the contingent and composite identity of the personification Charity (*Caritas*). Caecilie Weissert parses the sensuous form, nuptial meaning, and performative character of this embodied virtue, as she appears in a group of newly minted panel paintings by Frans Floris, Lambert Lombard, and Jan Massys, produced between 1540 and 1560, in reaction to a famous print by Jean Mignon after Andrea del Sarto. Inventories reveal that such pictures were displayed in upper-class homes, taking pride of place in rooms associated with the woman of the house, such as the kitchen or bedroom. The mixed messages they deliver—at once sacred and profane, demure and sensual, maternal and erotic—derive from the doctrine of matrimonial love codified in the treatises, epistles, and encomia of Juan Luis Vives and Desiderius Erasmus, who praise the conjugal bed as a licit instrument of uxorial persuasion and celebrate the erotic power of wives to civilize the violent and wayward impulses of their husbands. Moreover, Charity, as personified in these paintings, functions not merely as an attribute of wifely eros, but also as a locus of the charitable attention owed by men to their wives, for as the wife civilizes her spouse, so his task is to respond with love for love, by educating her both in mind and spirit. Ultimately, then, as Weissert demonstrates, these personifications implicitly encode a mutual relation that is reflexively enacted when the figure of Charity encounters the enamored beholder.

The complex relation amongst materiality, referentiality, and personification constitutes the subject of Arthur DiFuria's study of Maarten van Heemskerck's *Caritas* (c. 1545). Formerly the centerpiece of a triptych portraying the three cardinal virtues in the form of living effigies, the statuary figure of Charity incorporates numerous allusions to ancient and Italian art, and in addition, it draws attention to its dual status as an explicitly *painted* image that yet mimics convincingly the appearance of *sculpture*. What is it that such a figure bodies forth when the prosopopoeic process of embodiment is itself mediated by multiple references to materiality, to pagan antiquity, to the artifice of figuration, and to the trope of art becoming life? DiFuria argues that this very process becomes a signifying instrument for the contested character of sacred image-making in the Low Countries at mid-century.

Caroline Fowler explicates the multiple signifying functions of the personification *Caritas* in the *Artis Apellae liber* (1650–1656), the celebrated drawing manual designed by Abraham Bloemaert and engraved and published posthumously by his son Frederik. The *Caritas* is distinctive on several counts: it is one of only seven *chiaroscuro* featured in the book; it is the only personification; and it diverges from pictorial tradition in depicting Charity and her attendant

children as unsettled and discordant rather than content and harmonious. The figure, as Fowler shows, connects to and, more importantly, coordinates the two chiaroscuro that open and close Part 1—*Boy Drawing in the Studio* and *Saint in Prayer*—which respectively exemplify two responses to light, the one sensory, the other metaphysical: whereas the boy attends to the properties of light and shadow, the saint contemplates the light of divine inspiration. *Caritas*, an exemplary chiaroscuro, consists of light and shadow, but she is also the prosopopoeic embodiment of Christian love that lights the way to God. Furthermore, *Caritas* is reflexive, for she not only exemplifies the prosopopoeic and prosopographical process of bringing to life and giving face and voice to what is absent or abstract, but herself personifies this process as fundamental to the drawing manual by which she is comprised—in the sense that the *Artis Apellae liber* teaches how to body forth persons, representing them as if they were actually present. And yet, *Caritas* is depicted as somehow troubled, in response to confessional divisions that had fractured the once unified Christian polity of Bloemaert's native Utrecht.

Personifying Life and Afterlife, Trial and Retribution

We have thus far encountered personifications in paintings and prints. What about sculpture? Elizabeth Fowler takes a careful look at the two effigies of Lady Alice Chaucer above and below her tomb in the parish church of St. Mary the Virgin in Ewelme, Oxfordshire, following the procedures of viewing—or *ductus*—suggested by the architectural setting. Rising above the viewer's line of sight is the effigy of an idealized duchess Alice, signifying her social rank in life as well as on the day of resurrection. Below is the effigy of Alice 'in a frightening state of dessication', signifying her mortality and, by extension, that of her fellow men. Between these signifying layers appears the stone sarcophagus wherein Alice's remains are entombed. According to Fowler, the viewing procedure or *ductus* along the vertical axis of the monument 'reveals the devotional instrument that the tomb constitutes'. It would have invited contemporary viewers to contemplate both Alice's fate and their own, in life and death and in the afterlife. Fowler contextualizes the tomb's formal and thematic structure by referring to manuscript illumination and to images of the *danse macabre*, both visual and textual, particularly *The Daunce of Machabree* by Alice's poet-client, John Lydgate.

June Waudby delves into the troubled mind and emotions of the Penitent Sinner in Anne Locke's "Meditation", the final section of her translation of some sermons by John Calvin. This Sinner—a remote alter ego of the author—is

the name of the 'T' in this sequence of sonnets. Locke carefully dissects the Penitent Sinners' psyche, as it materializes in the 'T's record of her encounter with equally personified feelings and faculties that act upon her mind, troubled as it is by guilt and doubts about salvation. Locke was familiar with contemporary rhetoric, which enabled her sophisticatedly to apply *prosopopoeia* for the purpose of vivifying the Penitent Sinner's deepest emotions, giving them a face (*prosopon*) and a voice. In fact, given what Jean Bocharova has told us, this might have been the only way cognitively to process and communicate emotions as strong as these. The emotional goings-on take the form of legal proceedings, along the lines of the forensic exercise known as the *controversia*: accordingly, the Penitent Sinner becomes the subject of trial and retribution, with personifications pleading for and against her. The liveliness or *enargeia* thus created provides the reader with ample opportunity to engage in and learn from the process thus envisaged.

Personification and the Assertion of Allegorical Order

Lisa Rosenthal investigates the multivalent figure of Fortune in Frans Francken the Younger's *Painter's Cabinet* (c. 1627), within which a painter at his easel is seen to portray and, in this sense, to stabilize the many meanings that inhere or, better, transit through the personification *Fortuna*. Fortune, jointly identifiable as Occasion, embodies a congeries of negative associations—moral errancy, erotic desire, inconstancy of mind and heart—that the painter overmasters meta-pictorially by 'seizing the occasion' and painting Fortune's portrait; he thereby indelibly fixes her image in the form of a pictured picture, subsuming personified Fortune into the ambient allegorical order of a painted *constcamer* ('art gallery'). This meta-pictorial operation, observes Rosenthal, not only harnesses the Neo-Stoic virtues of *tranquillitas* and *constantia*, and confirms the painter's mimetic skill and power of visual discernment; it also proclaims his commercial acumen, by doubling as an idealized image of the kind of workshop gallery where commodified works of art were sold in early seventeenth-century Antwerp. And finally, the fact that the pose and gestures of Fortune are echoed by many of the protagonists featured in the *constcamer*'s other paintings—Mary in the *Penitent Magdalene*, Hercules in the *Rape of Deianeira*, or John in the *Crucifixion*—suggests that what Fortune personifies is the painter's moral competency, the skill he displays in using *pictura* to propagate virtue.

The stabilizing semantic function of personification within a discursively allegorical construction, and the figure's relation to an alternative mode of

signification, in which symbols partake of perceptual ambiguity and semantic indeterminacy, are the topics addressed by Max Weintraub in his study of Giambattista Tiepolo's *Allegory of the Planets and the Continents* (1752–1753) in Würzburg. The vast ceiling fresco consists of two parts painted in two pictorial modes: whereas *Africa*, *America*, and *Asia* are portrayed in a *non-finito* style that relies upon the beholder imaginatively to complete the unfinished forms, the climactic allegory, *Europe*, consists of clearly defined forms whose legibility reasserts the fresco's didactic imagery and argument, and conversely, diminishes the beholder's share in shaping the fresco's visual effects. These two modes, explains Weintraub, correlate to the ceremonial functions of the Treppenhause, the grand staircase overtopped by Tiepolo's *Allegory*: as the visitor progresses from *Africa*, *America*, and *Asia* to *Europe*, his freedom of perception and interpretation is abruptly curtailed, and the discursivity of the allegorical argument, and of its chief rhetorical device—personification—suddenly increases, in a dynamic staging of the absolute authority exercised by the artist's patron, Prince-Bishop Karl Phillip von Greiffenklau.

The Four Continents: Sources and Sentiments

Joaneath Spicer traces the genealogy of the personification of Africa, one of the Four Continents, in particular of her distinctive attribute, the elephant-head crest, as codified in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (ed. princeps, 1593; revised ed., 1613), the handbook of personified concepts widely consulted as an iconographical lexicon by poets, artists, and collectors. How did this attribute come to be, she asks, and further, why was it considered both memorable and meaningful? The elephant-head crest, it turns out, resulted from a confluence of visual and textual sources ingeniously woven together by learned painters such as Taddeo Zuccaro, chroniclers of courtly festivities such as Baccio Baldini, and humanist antiquarians and numismatists, such as Piero Valeriano and Hubert Goltzius. In the process, imperial imagery without an ancient textual pedigree—Augustan and Hadrianic coinage featuring a personification of the province Africa, for example—came to be associated with ancient texts that describe elements correlatable to this visual material—Eusebius on the effigies of deified animals worn by the Egyptians or Strabo on the elephant-hide shields of the Mauritanians. Visual and textual allegories of the four continents, as seen in the title-pages of Abraham Ortelius's *Theatrum orbis terrarum* (1570) and Hubert Goltzius's *Caesar Augustus* (1574), provided the matrix for this complex process of assimilation, in which the identities of personifications such as Africa came to be fixed in unique, distinctive, and recognizable

attributes. In turn, the connection between identity and identifiable attribute was made lexically and visually stable by the images and explanatory texts in Ripa's iconological dictionary of personification.

We are familiar with personifications of the Four Continents in print, but they appear in seventeenth-century needlework, too, and, as Heather A. Hughes reveals, 'enabled Englishwomen to engage with the "outer world" that lies beyond Europe's border'. First, Hughes traces the origins and development of representations of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America in engravings by Netherlandish masters, arguing that the appearance of these female figures aimed primarily to express cultural differences, rather than exemplifying the natural conditions and resources of the respective Continents. Next she analyses various examples of English needlework, which provided a very different thematic context for the Continents, since most of these embroideries visualize Old Testament topics. 'When paired with religious content', states Hughes, 'they could elicit wonder and appreciation for the vast complexity of God's creation', and helped to transmit knowledge about foreign cultures. But this did not amount to value-free ethnography. Whereas the peoples of Europe and Asia were monotheistic and white, those of Africa and America were polytheistic and dark. Their exoticness, howsoever fascinating, was inevitably construed as a sign of moral inferiority. Far from being an innocent pastime, embroidery fixed or, better, stitched evaluative assumptions into the minds of the women who sewed so expertly.

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PART 1

Cognitive Perspectives on Personification



Personification Allegory and Embodied Cognition

Jean Bocharova

It was generally understood throughout the Medieval period and most of the Renaissance that personification, whether in poetry or the visual arts, was not simply an arbitrary aesthetic technique but was useful for something. Not only were personified figures delightful to behold; they embodied ideas—including complex philosophical or religious ideas—and, in the most basic sense, were seen as either making these ideas more palatable, more easily comprehended, or as veiling them in obscurity, both as protection against profane minds and as reward for the worthy.¹ Often conflated with or referred to as a branch of allegory in Renaissance treatises on rhetoric and poetics, personification was seen as one of the figures contributing to the force and vividness of a work.² In joining philosophical abstraction to imagery, it was one of a group of figures that could make an impression on the mind, thus working to shape and fashion an individual's character. Such fashioning was thought to be achieved in large part through the force of truth embodied in poetic imagery. Thus, when writers set out to teach or describe theories of persuasion, they often wandered into speculations about how the mind works, their texts conveying a common interest in understanding and articulating how the human brain encounters and perceives imagery through language. For many, the ability of a poet or an orator to put a scene 'before the eyes' was thought necessary to move an audience to action, and in these formulations it was assumed that detailed and descriptive language could generate an image in the mind, images that had the power to stir the emotions, to be retained in memory, to sway the judgment, and to move an individual to action.³ The interest in the mind demonstrated

1 See Murrin M., *The Veil of Allegory: Some Notes Toward a Theory of Allegorical Rhetoric in the English Renaissance* (Chicago: 1969); Wind E., *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (New York: 1969); and Katzenellenbogen A., *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Mediaeval Art* (New York: 1964).

2 Tuve R., *Elizabethan & Metaphysical Imagery* (Chicago: 1947) 80, 95–96.

3 Frede D., "The Cognitive Role of Phantasia in Aristotle", in Nussbaum M. – Rorty A. (eds.), *Essays on Aristotle's De Anima* (Oxford: 1992) 279–296, esp. 285–290; Cicero, *De Oratore* 1.5; Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* 8.3.

in the rhetorical tradition, including commentary on poetry, suggests that although the ‘inward turn’⁴ in Western culture that led to modern neuroscience is usually associated with late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century developments in medicine, a desire to understand how imagery is perceived by the brain and how it contributes to reason, emotion, belief, and behavior is not unique to the twentieth- or twenty-first centuries. As John Onians puts it, ancient philosophers and modern theorists ‘may differ in the degree of their knowledge of nature and neuroscience, but they share the belief that such knowledge is potentially useful. The better this knowledge became, the more they took advantage of it.’⁵ In identifying universal capacities of the human mind, Renaissance texts anticipate contemporary theories that attempt to articulate how a text exerts influence over a reader.

So what can modern neuropsychological insights about human cognition tell us about the nature of personification in poetry and art? The answer is not simple given the many difficulties of studying a network architecture with billions of individual components and trillions of individual connections. Speculation abounds, and carefully measured and qualified conclusions are often oversimplified by media reports hailing the most recent discoveries of Neuroscience. Despite the impossibility of observing every neuronal connection in real time, there are some basic principles about the structure and working of the brain that are uncontroversial: namely, that neurons exist, that they send information to other neurons; that connections between neurons can be strengthened or weakened depending on their patterns of use; that some areas in the brain seem specialized for certain tasks; and that perception involves integration of information from a variety of neuronal sources. While the functioning of individual neurons is generally agreed upon, neuroscientists understand less about the exact structure and operation of groups of neurons that form neuronal circuits and, ultimately, the neuronal nets that comprise larger brain regions. Scientists can track blood flow, glucose consumption, and electrical activity, indicating when some areas are more active than others; they can study people who have suffered brain lesions, tracking the deficits that arise as a result; they can directly stimulate the brain of animals; and they can stain brain samples after someone dies to study the neuronal connections. But none of these techniques can reach the level of resolution that would be required to observe and record the firing pattern of billions of

4 Kandel E., *The Age of Insight: The Quest to Understand the Unconscious in Art, Mind, and Brain, from Vienna 1900 to the Present* (New York: 2012) 3–27.

5 Onians J., *Neuroarthistory: From Aristotle and Pliny to Baxandall and Zeki* (New Haven – London: 2007) 10.

cells and connections used in any given activity. Added to this is the inherent fragmentation caused by various lines of inquiry, the specialized work of hundreds of labs that do not always communicate well or collaborate with those working on similar projects. Thus, questions about how the brain works are likely to elicit different answers depending on the approach of the group being asked and whether they are housed in departments of neuroscience, psychology, cognitive psychology, cognitive science, or cognitive linguistics. In short, despite much agreement about basic functioning and structure, when it comes to higher-order cognition, there is no monolithic Voice of Neuroscience that can give us definitive answers.

Nevertheless, we have reached a point where it is now possible at least to begin to study the physiological effects that art evokes from audiences. The biggest inroads have been made in art historical studies. David Freedberg's *The Power of Images* (1989) was one of the first sustained attempts to account for 'the evidence for the effectiveness and provocativeness of images', and David Marr's publication of *Vision* (1992) enabled art historians to draw heavily from the explosion of new, detailed knowledge about the brain's visual processing system.⁶ Current work by Freedberg and others examine how images engage systems governing emotion and empathy.⁷ In literary studies, the 'cognitive turn', which has been gaining momentum since the late 1990s,⁸ is part of a larger cultural drift in the humanities and sciences away from the epistemological extremes of relativism and rationalism. Advancements in neuroscience have prompted increasing dissatisfaction with an atomistic, mechanistic view of human nature inherited from Newtonian mechanics and Cartesian philosophy. Replacing these is a view of the human mind as a dynamic, self-organizing, selectional system that is shaped both by environmental stimuli and by its own emergent structures.⁹ The newfound complexity of the human brain has led

6 Marr D., *Vision: A Computational Investigation into the Human Representation and Processing of Visual Information* (Cambridge, MA: 1982); Freedberg D., *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago – London: 1989) 26.

7 Freedberg D. – Gallese V., "Motion, Emotion and Empathy in Esthetic Experience", *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 11,5,197–203; Freedberg D., "Empathy, Movement and Emotion", in *Emotional Systems. Contemporary Art between Emotion and Reason* (Cinisello Balsamo: 2007) 38–61.

8 Richardson A. – Steen F.F., "Literature and the Cognitive Revolution: An Introduction", *Poetics Today* 23,1 (2002) 1–8, 1–2; Turner M., "The Cognitive Study of Art, Language, and Literature", *Poetics Today* 23,1 (2002) 9–20, esp. 19.

9 Edelman G., *Second Nature: Brain Science and Human Knowledge* (New Haven: 2006) 12–42; Juarrero A., *Dynamics in Action: Intentional Behavior as a Complex System* (Cambridge, MA – London: 1999) 151–194.

researchers across disciplines to reconsider the limits of scientific description as well as the significance of the body's interaction with the physical world.¹⁰ Of greatest relevance to literary studies is how this reconsideration influenced developments in cognitive science and cognitive linguistics. As is commonly noted, concepts coming out of these fields—particularly in the work of Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner (conceptual blends) and George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (metaphor and embodiment)—have greatly influenced work in cognitive literary studies, especially in stylistics and Shakespeare studies.¹¹ Like art history, the field has also benefitted significantly from work coming out of the neurosciences on mirror neurons, emotions, and empathy.¹² In the words of F. Elizabeth Hart, scholars working from a cognitive perspective 'believe that our approaches to literary questions can and should be enriched by an acknowledgment of how the enabling and constraining behaviors of brains and minds contribute to literary experience'.¹³ This emphasis on the embeddedness of authors and readers in the physical world places cognitive literary studies in tension with poststructuralist accounts of language and aligns it more closely with philosophers such as Michael Polanyi and Maurice Merleau-Ponty.¹⁴ It also allows for literary studies to influence cognitive studies as the latter have become more interested in the ways that literature can teach us about the brain.¹⁵

To examine what a cognitive approach might add to a study of personification, I draw primarily on Lakoff and Johnson's connectionist theories of conceptual metaphor and join it with V.S. Ramachandran and William Hirstein's

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- 10 Edelman, *Second Nature* 68–87, 142–158; McConachie B. – Hart F.E., *Performance & Cognition: Theater Studies and the Cognitive Turn* (New York: 2006) xi; Fauconnier G. – Turner M., *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexity* (New York: 2002) 3–38.
 - 11 Brandt L. – Brandt P.A., "Cognitive Poetics and Imagery", *European Journal of English Studies* 9,2 (2005) 117–130; Cook A., "Interplay: The Method and Potential of a Cognitive Scientific Approach to Theatre", *Theatre Journal* 59,4 (2007) 579–594; Pandit L. – Hogan P.C., "Introduction: Morsels and Modules: On Embodying Cognition in Shakespeare's Plays", *College Literature* 33,1 (2006) 1–13.
 - 12 Pandit L. – Hogan P.C., "Introduction" 8; Cook A., "Interplay", 558; Hart F.E., "Performance, Phenomenology, and the Cognitive Turn" in McConachie B. – F.E. Hart, *Performance & Cognition* 29–51.
 - 13 Hart F.E., "The View of Where We've Been and Where We'd Like to Go", *College Literature* 33,1 (2006) 225–237, here 226.
 - 14 Hart, "The View" 225–228; McConachie – Hart, *Performance & Cognition* xii, 3–5; Richardson A. – Steen F.F., "Literature and the Cognitive Revolution" 3; Hart, "Performance"; Takaki K., "Embodied Knowing: The Tacit Dimension in Johnson and Lakoff, and Merleau-Ponty", *Tradition & Discovery: The Polanyi Society Periodical* 36,2 (2010) 26–39.
 - 15 Hart, "The View" 27.

findings on the neurocorrelates of aesthetic response. Below is a brief overview of these models followed by an examination of how they might lend insight into one instance of personification, the Cave of Despair episode in Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, a text with the avowed intention 'to fashion a gentleman', to shape the mind and habits of his reader through poetry.¹⁶ Though the poem intends to instruct, delight and move, unlike overly didactic allegories like *Pilgrim's Progress*, *The Faerie Queene* weaves a complex pattern of episodic narrative and allegorical imagery, frustrating attempts to reduce the text to simple precept.¹⁷ What one of these approaches, neuroaesthetics, tells us about the kind of dynamic personification of *The Faerie Queene* is what Renaissance thinkers already knew—that good poetry involves a skillful deployment of figurative language, a break from the ordinary that pleases the ear and intellect without sinking into predictable or indecorous use. Furthermore, inasmuch as such use of figures heightens our limbic response and focuses our attentional resources, it might also aid in our ability to retain poetic images in memory.¹⁸ As a complementary approach, structured connectionism—the form of neuromodeling used by those studying embodied cognition—would suggest that personification, by depicting abstract concepts with physical bodies, mirrors higher-order reasoning processes, processes, they say, that involve the recruitment of sensorimotor systems that enable us to comprehend abstract concepts.¹⁹ When viewed in light of the Despair episode, a structured connectionist approach would suggest that much of the nature of despair is conveyed through a dramatization of primary metaphors that form the basis of our conceptualizations of causation, of mental states, and of changes in and out of mental states. Moreover, the personified figure of Despair himself represents a basic-level category, an object rendered at a level of specificity optimal for cognitive processing. Taken together, these two approaches suggest how our experience with the personification of Holiness meeting Despair, an experience woven into our memory, form part of the warp and woof of our very knowledge of these concepts.

16 Spenser Edmund, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. T. Roche, Jr. (London – New York: 1978) 15.

17 Tuve R., *Allegorical Imagery: Some Mediaeval Books and Their Posterity* (Princeton: 1966) 28, n. 11, 28–29.

18 Kandel E., "The Molecular Biology of Memory Storage: A Dialog between Genes and Synapses", *Bioscience Reports* 21,5 (2001) 565–610, 578, 583.

19 Feldman J., *From Molecule to Metaphor: A Neural Theory of Language* (Cambridge – London 2006) 105–122; Feldman J., "Connectionist Representation of Concepts", in Waltz D. – Feldman J. (eds.), *Connectionist Models and Their Implications: Readings from Cognitive Science* (Norwood, NJ: 1988) 341–364.

Neuroaesthetics and Structured Connectionism

Neuroaesthetics comes out of the field of neuroscience and is best characterized as the search for the neurocorrelates of aesthetic experience. Those working in this area try to locate and articulate what happens in the brain when a person is pleased by an aesthetic object. The field has burgeoned in the past decade since the 1999 publication of Semir Zeki's *Inner Vision*, the text that coined the term 'neuroaesthetics'. Much of the current work in neuroaesthetics involves the use of fMRI brain scans or studies of people with brain injuries to isolate specific areas of the brain—e.g. ventral striatum, amygdala, prefrontal cortex, extrastriate body area—activated by aesthetic encounters. The general consensus emerging from such work is that when a person undergoes an aesthetic experience, reward pathways interact in a complex way with cortical and subcortical regions, including those associated with emotion and with higher order cognition.²⁰ However, technical discussions of specific brain regions may not be as interesting or relevant to scholars in the humanities as a more general overview of aesthetic response. This paper, thus, focuses on the theories of Ramachandran and Hirstein²¹ in their well-known contribution to neuroaesthetics, "The Science of Art: A Neurological Theory of Aesthetic Experience", a text that emphasizes not the minute influence of an aesthetic technique to a particular brain region but that highlights the ways that aesthetic objects prompt us to attend to some features over others.

According to this theory, certain aesthetic techniques elicit a predictable response in people across cultures. Often, the neurophysiology of an aesthetic universal involves activation of the limbic system, which is involved in emotion and memory and which plays a large part in determining our primal, 'gut' responses to attractive and pleasurable or repulsive and dangerous objects. In

20 Nadal M. – Skov M., "Introduction to the Special Issue: Toward an Interdisciplinary Neuroaesthetics", *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* 7,1 (2013) 1–12.

21 The field of neuroaesthetics in general and Ramachandran and Hirstein in particular have been criticized for their seemingly reductive view of art and, in the case of Ramachandran, for marked arrogance about the superiority of neuroscience to philosophy. See, for example, *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 7,8–9 (2000), especially the article by Donny Wheelwell, the *nom de guerre* of a scholar who describes Ramachandran and Hirstein's work as 'reductive megalomania'; Wheelwell D., "Against the Reduction of Art to Galvanic Skin Response", *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 7,8–9 (2000) 37–42, esp. 38. This paper does not claim that neuroaesthetics is better than traditional forms of criticism or that it ought to be the standard approach to aesthetic experience. Rather, this is simply one attempt at an attempt to view a Renaissance text through the lens of neuroscience and cognitive science to see what would emerge from such a critical approach.

this way, aesthetic universals tap into those pathways that offer us pleasurable neurochemical rewards when we carry out mental processes necessary for our survival—such as identifying important objects in the environment, recognizing similar objects, making distinctions between objects, or solving complex problems.²²

One example of an aesthetic universal is the peak shift effect. The peak shift effect occurs when an artist amplifies a distinguishing characteristic of a thing, representing it in the artistic work as a ‘super stimulus’ that ends up more powerfully activating the neuronal mechanisms in the brain associated with the representation.²³ The peak shift phenomenon was discovered in part through Nikolaas Tinbergen’s famous study of sea gull chicks. In the study, Tinbergen found that baby sea gulls—who naturally begin pecking at their mother’s beak when they see its red spot—will peck even more vigorously when exposed to an artificial beak with an exaggerated stimulus: in the study, three red stripes instead of one red dot. From this and other studies, researchers have concluded that, similar to the pecking sea gull chicks, humans respond more strongly to images depicting exaggerations than they do to more faithful representations of natural features, a finding that, according to Ramachandran and Hirstein, accounts for the appeal of techniques such as caricature, an exaggerated representation that paradoxically seems more real than the original; sketches, representations from which details are omitted and which thus emphasize (exaggerate) formal lines; and erotic sculpture, in which the secondary sex characteristics of a woman are exaggerated in order to be more arousing.²⁴ These types of exaggerations thus involve cutting out of redundant or extraneous information and can occur in any of the domains for which the brain is specialized,²⁵ including color, form, or vocalizations.

Another example of an aesthetic universal is the phenomenon of grouping or binding. This occurs both when we are able to distinguish and image from a background, especially from a background that may blend in or distort the object (think of the Internet games asking, ‘Can you spot the animal in this picture?’) and when we identify similarities between different percepts, for example the same color in different places (think of picking out a scarf with red flecks to match a red shirt).²⁶ In poetry, the phenomenon of rhyme—whether

22 Ramachandran V.S. – Hirstein W., “The Science of Art: A Neurological Theory of Aesthetic Experience”, *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 6,6–7 (1999) 15–51.

23 Ibid. 19–20.

24 Ibid. 18.

25 Ibid. 20.

26 Ibid. 21–22.

end rhyme, alliteration, consonance, or assonance—as well as syntactical patterns, for example isocolon, would constitute grouping. Although this phenomenon has been widely identified and discussed outside of neuroaesthetics, Ramachandran and Hirstein explain new findings that such bindings or groupings activate the limbic system and are thus reinforcing. That is, the pleasure we receive from this phenomenon is not simply a function of our higher-order thinking that recognizes a similarity. Rather, the reinforcing rewards come at lower levels of visual or other sensory processing stages. In other words, lower-level efforts at perception are rewarded through the limbic system, which perpetuates the activity and produces greater rewards as the image is processed. As they put it, ‘Given the limited attentional resources in the brain and limited neural space for competing representations, at *every* stage in processing there is generated a “Look here, there is a clue to something potentially object-like” signal that produces limbic activation and draws your attention to that region (or feature), thereby facilitating the processing of those regions or features at earlier stages.’²⁷

According to Ramachandran and Hirstein, it is this manipulation of attentional resources that account for much of the pleasure we find in other aesthetic universals. For example, the principle of isolation, the focusing on a single component of an image—such as form in line drawings or color in Dadaist art—cuts out redundant information and better directs our attention, ‘thereby allowing you to notice the “enhancements” introduced by the artist. (And that in turn would amplify the limbic activation and reinforcement produced by those enhancements).’²⁸ Other aesthetic universals include the principle of contrast, exploiting the attention we give to edges and regions of change (which tend to bear information);²⁹ the principle of symmetry, which draws on the attention we give and interest we find in distinguishing biological life from other objects;³⁰ and the principle of complexity, which holds that ‘an object discovered after a struggle is more pleasing than one that is instantly obvious [because] the struggle *itself* is reinforcing—so that you don’t give up too easily—whether looking for a leopard behind foliage or a mate hidden in the mist.’³¹ Overall, that Ramachandran and Hirstein link elements of artistic production to limbic reinforcement is significant because it upholds the notion

²⁷ Ibid. 23.

²⁸ Ibid. 24.

²⁹ Ibid. 25–27.

³⁰ Ibid. 27.

³¹ Ibid. 30.

that some of these elements do, indeed, exploit ‘universal’ neuronal structures and thus comprise a cross-cultural set of aesthetically pleasing techniques.

Despite these insights into the ways that the brain responds to art, neuroaesthetics has been criticized for its reduction of art to aesthetics and for its failure to account for how art makes meaning for different audiences.³² A complementary approach, one that accounts for the semantic content of artistic representation, is connectionism. Arising largely out of studies in artificial intelligence during the 1980s, connectionist work is often done by cognitive scientists housed in psychology departments, though there is considerable overlap between cognitive psychology, cognitive linguistics, and neuroscience proper. In contrast to neuroscientists who focus on where various functions are processed in the brain, connectionists try to discover how brain-like network architectures can carry out higher order cognition. Thus, much of their work involves neurocomputation and the construction of computer models that mimic brain architecture.³³ Although this often does not involve direct contact with actual brains, connectionist models have yielded impressive and surprising insights into the nature of human cognition. Artificial networks constructed with neuron-like processing units—units that, like a neuron that strengthens or weakens its connection to other neurons, experiences the increase or decrease in the weight between connections—have been taught to learn how to pronounce words;³⁴ to use advanced rules of syntax;³⁵ to recognize faces from multiple angles;³⁶ to predict the effects of weight and distance on a balance beam;³⁷ and to reconstruct a whole image from a partial association.³⁸ Taking connectionism one step further, structured connectionism attempts to

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- 32 Gopnik B., “Aesthetic Science and Artistic Knowledge”, in Shimamura A. – Palme, S. (eds.), *Aesthetic Science: Connecting Minds, Brains, and Experience* (New York: 2012) 129–159.
 - 33 McLeod P. – Plunkett K. – Rolls E., *Introduction to Connectionist Modelling of Cognitive Processes* (New York – Tokyo 1998).
 - 34 Plaut D. – McClelland J. – Seidenberg M. – Patterson K., “Understanding Normal and Impaired Reading: Computational Principles in Quasi-Regular Domains”, *Psychological Review* 103 (1996) 56–115.
 - 35 Elman J., “Learning and Development in Neural Networks: The Importance of Starting Small”, *Cognition* 48 (1993) 71–99.
 - 36 McLeod – Plunkett – Rolls, *Introduction* 294–300.
 - 37 Hertz J. – Krogh A. – Palmer R., *Introduction to the Theory of Neural Computation* (Redwood, CA: 1991).
 - 38 On the distinction between PDP connectionism and structured connectionism, see Lakoff G. – Johnson M., *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: 1999) 569–583; and Feldman, *From Molecule to Metaphor* 117–122, 277–282.

integrate the human body into models of cognition, trying thus to account for the fact that all of our inputs are mediated by the body's sensorimotor systems. Cognitive scientists using a structured connectionist approach have, as a result of this integration, arrived at theory that metaphorical thinking is at the heart of all human cognition and that to study metaphor is to study truth as we are able to comprehend it.³⁹

The centrality of metaphor to human thought, according to the structured connectionist model, arises out of the basic workings of neurons. As Donald Hebb posited and as others have confirmed, when a neuron fires and activates another neuron frequently enough, the strength between their connections increases: in other words, as the popular saying goes, 'neurons that fire together wire together'.⁴⁰ This 'strengthening' takes the form of new physical structures being created in the brain as cells create new proteins or new receptors or as they split off and build whole new connections.⁴¹ Thus, as a human interacts with the world—as it tests its muscles in utero, as its eyes receive visual input, as its ears receive auditory input—the neurons receiving and sending sensorimotor input form and strengthen the connections necessary for him or her to function in a physical environment—muscles come under greater control, visual systems in the brain integrate signals received from the retina, and auditory signals are integrated into coherent sounds, and some sounds come to be recognized and processed as linguistic inputs. For structured connectionism, the same mechanisms that the brain uses to process sensory input are recruited in what comes to be higher-order cognition and abstract reasoning. 'Metaphor' in this system refers to cross-domain mappings between sensorimotor experience and abstract concepts.⁴² In this view, neuronal connections that allow us to perceive common features of our physical environment—basic-level concepts, spatial-relations concepts (e.g. container schemas, source-path-goal schemas, bodily projections) and event-structure concepts—are thought to be recruited to form primary metaphors, such as 'More is Up', 'Affection is Warmth', or 'Importance is Big'.⁴³ These primary metaphors—themselves 'constrained both by the nature of our bodies and brains

39 Lakoff – Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh* 118–129.

40 Hebb D.O., *The Organization of Behavior: A Neuropsychological Theory* (New York: 1949).

41 Bailey C. – Kandel E., "Structural Changes Accompanying Memory Storage", *Annual Review of Physiology* 55 (1993) 397–426.

42 Feldman, *From Molecule to Metaphor* 194–225; Lakoff – Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh* 45–73.

43 Lakoff – Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh* 96.

and by the reality of our daily interactions'⁴⁴—can then be combined to form more complex, culturally specific metaphors (e.g. Life is a Journey). Similarly, as objects are learned in their cultural context, neuronal connections form to represent 'cultural frames' which can be mapped onto other cultural frames.⁴⁵

As I will discuss below, this line of research into human cognition may help to illuminate the physiological effects of poetry and art on the mind. The structured connectionist perspective of embodied cognition and the centrality of metaphorical thinking would seem especially well suited for explaining how personification draws on sensorimotor systems to make meaning and to structure thought. Take for example the personification of Justice, often blindfolded holding in one hand a sword and scales in the other. Like many such personifications that use a human body adorned with significant objects to stand in for a virtue or vice, this figure demonstrates three important aspects of embodied cognition as described through structured connectionism: projection, primary and complex metaphors, and inferences based on cultural frames. Projection refers to a method of understanding and representing spatial relationships—relationships that are understood only when we process them with some kind of conceptual system whereby objects are comprehended in terms of other objects, physical boundaries, and landmarks. Projection refers to a conceptual system whereby the body is 'projected' onto other objects in the environment to account for their arrangement in space. We do this in English when we impose 'fronts' and 'backs' on objects (e.g. 'She is in front of the building') or when we say that a house is located at the 'foot' of the mountain. Other languages make greater use of this conceptual system, such as the Mixtec expression 'animal-back' of the house for 'on the roof'.⁴⁶ In contrast to projection, one common conceptual system that we use to make sense of objects in space is the container schema. To say, for example, that the butterfly is 'in the garden' suggests a bounded region in space with an interior and an exterior that can contain an object.⁴⁷ A third common method used by various cultures to conceptualize spatial relationships is the source-path-goal schema, whereby spatial logic is understood in terms of a trajector moving along a path toward

44 Ibid. 96.

45 Fauconnier G., *Mappings in Thought and Language* (London: 1997); St. Clair R., "Metaphorical Blends, Recruited Frames and metaphors across Cultures", *Intercultural Communication Studies* 11,3 (2002) 1–24.

46 Lakoff – Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh* 35.

47 Ibid. 31.

a goal. In English, this schema is represented in words such as ‘toward’, ‘away’, ‘through’, and ‘along.’⁴⁸

Theories of embodied cognition contend that these different methods of conceptualizing spatial relationships, methods arising out of and drawing on the neural systems involved in physical perception, shape our reasoning process.⁴⁹ Imagine, for example, that Renaissance virtues and vices were conceptualized not through projection but through the container schema, with their identifying objects placed in box. Justice would thus be rendered as a box containing a blindfold, weights, and a sword, a box placed next to other boxes containing other significant items. Clearly, inasmuch as such personifications of virtue and vice involve spatial relationships—with significant objects arranged together in space—the choice between projection and the container schema leads to important implications: Containers cannot move, and the choice of the container schema for the arrangement of significant items would restrict our ability to further depict the nature of any given virtue or vice. When objects are mapped onto a body in personification, however, the method of projection not only supports the display of objects but it animates them by enabling either a static or dynamic representation of the personified figure. This begins to illustrate the central claim that concepts arising out of our experience in the physical world, such as spatial relations schemas, make abstract reasoning possible.

In addition to projection and the shaping power of our conceptualization of spatial relationships, another central concept that can be illustrated in the figure of Justice is primary metaphor. As Joseph Grady and others have traced, primary metaphors consist of a transference of sensorimotor imagery to subjective domains.⁵⁰ The theory of primary metaphor in structured connectionism posits that we understand subjective states—for example, affection, happiness, difficulty, similarity—by mapping them onto sensorimotor experience. Thus, we understand a term like ‘affection’ through the sensorimotor experience of ‘warmth’. In this view, affection *is* warmth. Primary metaphors are thought to be universal or near universal as they arise out of the common condition of humans being required to conceptualize subjective experience through sensorimotor domains. Other examples of primary metaphors are ‘Happy is Up’, ‘Difficulties are Burdens’, ‘Similarity is Closeness’.⁵¹ These and

48 Ibid. 34.

49 Ibid. 118–129.

50 Ibid. 45–46; Grady J., *Foundations of Meaning: Primary Metaphors and Primary Scenes* (Berkeley: 1997).

51 Lakoff – Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh* 50–51.

other primary metaphors can be combined to form culturally specific complex metaphors, such as 'Life is a Journey', which draws on the primary metaphors 'Purposes are Destinations' and 'Actions are Motions'.⁵² Returning to the figure of Justice, both the scales and the blindfold can be traced back to primary metaphors. The scales depict the primary metaphor 'Choosing is Weighing', which draws on another metaphor 'Importance is Big/Heavy'. The blindfold creates a complex metaphor 'Impartiality is Blindness', from the primary metaphors 'Knowing is Seeing' and 'Knowing from a Perspective is Seeing from a Point of View'.⁵³

Just as primary metaphors account for a basic recruitment of sensorimotor experience to conceptualize subjective experience, cultural frames are large-scale, culturally specific associations that are built up in the brain in response to repeated situations.⁵⁴ Cultural frames place individual words in a system of relations and possible actions. In this view, for example, 'baseball' might evoke the baseball frame, with people and objects distinguished by their function (the actions they will carry out) and their relation to others in physical space. The cultural frame constitutes the range of conventional functions and relationships of people and objects within its domain so that in a baseball frame we would expect bats to be found near the field and not in the stands. According to this theory, words are not linked to their definition but are always conceptually linked to a cultural frame, a frame based on our embodied experience.⁵⁵ The figure of Justice evokes a cultural frame—political, legal, and martial systems of power—with the sword. Moreover, just as sensorimotor experience is mapped onto subjective experience to form primary metaphors, so too can cultural frames be mapped onto each other to form more complex conceptualizations and abstractions. To illustrate this point, Giles Fauconier and Mark Turner use the example of a surgeon being called a 'butcher'. In this metaphor, two cultural frames—the operating room and the butcher shop—are blended to form a new meaning.⁵⁶ At the neuronal level, structured connectionists suggests that this kind of metaphor, the blending of two cultural frames, as well as other kinds of metaphors, blending of schemas or joining of an embodied

52 Ibid. 61.

53 Ibid. 238.

54 Fillmore C., "An Alternative to Checklist Theories of Meaning", in *Proceedings of the First Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society* (Berkeley: 1975) 123–131.

55 Ibid. 125–126.

56 Fauconnier G. – Turner M., "Blending as a Central Process of Grammar", in Goldberg A. (ed.), *Conceptual Structure, Discourse, and Language* (Stanford: 1996) 113–129; St. Clair, "Metaphorical Blends" 11.



FIGURE 1.1 *Anonymous, The Redcrosse Knight. Woodcut, quarto. Edmund Spenser, The Faerie Queene [...] (London, John Wolfe for William Ponsonbie: 1590). The Huntington Library, San Marino, 56742.*

concept to an abstract concept, occur through the formation of a new neuronal circuit between the blended frames or ideas.⁵⁷

Holiness Meets Despair

Though not comprehensive and though not offering explanations that fully account for all of the microcircuitry of the trillions of connections in the

57 Feldman, *From Molecule to Metaphor* 119–121; Fauconnier – Turner, *The Way We Think* 89–112.



FIGURE 1.2 William Kent, *The Redcrosse Knight is saved from Despair by Una*. Copper plate, quarto. Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene* [...] (London, for J. Brindley and S. Wright: 1751), San Marino, *The Huntington Library*, 221307.

brain, the theories of aesthetic universals and structured connectionism taken together are useful tools for speculating about how an imagined reader's brain might respond to a literary world in all its complexity. To further examine the implications of these theories for Renaissance personification, I turn now to Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. In canto ix of Book 1, Redcrosse (the Knight of Holiness) [Fig. 1.1] encounters Despair, one of the many personified vices. In this episode, one of the last before Redcrosse reaches his final foe, the dragon that has laid waste to Una's (Una, 'Truth') kingdom, the Knight of Holiness, having just been liberated from Orgoglio's (Orgoglio, a form of Pride) dungeon, meets Sir Trevisan, a knight fleeing from the Cave of Despair. Trevisan's companion, Sir Terwin did not escape and was instead persuaded by Despair to kill himself. To avenge Terwin's death, Redcrosse confronts Despair. After listening to the enemy's argument that Terwin desired to die, that it was merciful to provide him the means, that Redcrosse's desire for rest and ease would be achieved in death, that longer life leads to greater sin and greater punishment, that Redcrosse's own sins show him worthy of death, that death is the end of all woes, Redcrosse finds himself with a dagger ready to thrust into his own chest until Una intervenes [Fig. 1.2]. Given Redcrosse's station

as the Knight of Holiness, scholars often point to the theological and rhetorical significance of Despair's argument to persuade Redcrosse to suicide and of Redcrosse's responses and ultimate salvation, sections taking up half of the Despair episode.⁵⁸ However, the theories I have just introduced would suggest that a reader's understanding of the concept of despair is just as strongly influenced by the poetry and imagery in the first half of the scene as it is by the explicit theological arguments that follow.

Ramachandran and Hirstein's findings regarding aesthetic universals suggest that the limbic system is engaged and attention heightened in the first lines of the Despair episode, a section of text that renders the scene through the peak shift phenomenon. The episode begins when Redcrosse sees a knight flying toward him in a state of fear:

So as they traueild, lo they gan espy
 An armed knight towards them gallop fast,
 That seemed from some feared foe to fly,
 Or other griesly thing, that him agast.
 Still as he fled, his eye was backward cast,
 As if his feare still followed him behind;
 Als flew his steed, as he his bands had brast,
 And with his winged heeles did tread the wind,
 As he had beene a fole of *Pegasus* his kind.

Nigh as he drew, they might perceiue his head
 To be vnarmd, and curld vncombed heares
 Vpstaring stiffe, dismayd with vncouth dread;
 Nor drop of bloud in all his face appears
 Nor life in limbe: and to increase his feares,
 In fowle reproch of knighthoods faire degree,
 About his neck an hempen rope he weares,
 That with his glistring armes does ill agree;
 But he of rope or armes has now no memoree. (1.ix.21–22)

The fleeing knight, Sir Trevisan, is here made into a super stimulus of a person experiencing fear. Note that all references to his appearance that we might consider average have been cut out in favor of exaggerated signs of his fearful state: His '*eye was backward cast*', his head could be seen with '*curld vncombed*

58 E.g. Skulsky H., "Despair", in Hamilton A.C. (ed.), *The Spenser Encyclopedia* (Toronto: 1997) 213–214.

heares / Vpstarving stiffe', and his paleness and weakness are rendered extreme, 'Nor drop of blood in all his face appears / Nor life in limbe'. Much in the same way that an artificial beak with three stripes is an exaggeration of a natural beak, the details depicting Sir Trevisan work together to produce an exaggerated image. Although we encounter this image through the medium of poetry, it is still accurate to describe it as an 'image'. Research in visual processing has shown that the same regions in the brain that are activated when we are looking at an actual object are also activated when we are *thinking* about an object, even if it is not actually present.⁵⁹ Of course, without actual retinal stimulation the intensity of our mental images is dampened in comparison with objects we can actually see, but, perhaps as an antidote to the weakened experience of imagining an image, the peak shift effect amplifies our natural responses by creating a super stimulus.

Other aesthetic universals operating here are grouping, contrast, and complexity. The measure of the Spenserian stanza itself comprises multiple groupings and contrast. In a single line, iambic feet are repeated or 'grouped'; lines of five feet are similarly grouped and then contrasted with a final line of six iambic feet, together these lines form a stanza—eight lines of iambic pentameter and one alexandrine—that is then grouped with stanzas of the exact form. Further grouping occurs in the rhyme scheme—each stanza taking the same pattern of ababbcbcc—as well as in the multiple instances of alliteration that appear in Spenser's poetry: here, for example, in 'feared foe to fly, bands had brast, life in limb', and several other instances in this passage and throughout the poem. Examples of the grouping principle would also include rhetorical schemes such as this isocolon: 'Nor drop of blood [...] Nor life in limb'. It is important that all of these elements contribute to the poem's complexity, rather than dull monotony. Thus, according to the theory of aesthetic universals, Spenser's arrangement of sound is one aspect of his poetry—in addition to the peak shift principle and other aspects of its semantic complexity—that activates the reader's limbic system, evoking a primal emotional response, what we might call 'delight', and in this way encouraging us to continue reading.

But, as mentioned above, the simple identification of aesthetic universals at work for any aesthetic object cannot begin to account for how the brain achieves meaning or understanding of abstract concepts like Despair. For this reason, it might be helpful to turn to approaches that investigate such aspects of cognition more directly. A reading of the episode informed by Lakoff and Johnson's cognitive linguistic approach, which is rooted in structured

59 Bergen B., *Louder Than Words: The New Science of How the Mind Makes Meaning* (New York: 2012) 30; Finke R.A., *Principles of Mental Imagery* (Cambridge, MA: 1989).

connectionist models of cognition, would suggest that a prototypical reader would likely come to a deeper understanding of the nature of despair as a result of how the narrative structure of the Despair episode evokes metaphorical conceptualization of mental states and causation. Lakoff and Johnson argue that metaphors of causation are based in bodily experience and constitute our ability to understand causation as an abstract concept, one that will factor into the more culturally specific depiction of despair. At the heart of all conceptualizations of causation is the prototype whereby an agent manipulates an object in physical space.⁶⁰ This embodied experience leads to several common primary metaphors for causation. Four in particular are relevant to the Despair episode: 'Causes are Forces', 'Causation is Transfer of Possession', 'Changes are Motions', and 'States are Locations'.⁶¹

The primary metaphors 'Changes are Motions' and 'States are Locations' are evoked in the episode's structure. Overall, the episode is structured in terms of movement away from (Trevisan), towards (Trevisan, in his story), towards (Redcrosse), and away from (Redcrosse) the Cave of Despair—the location that represents the state of despair. The change into or out of a state of despair is thus rendered in terms of motion to and from a location. The first instance of this is Trevisan's flight away from Despair. Later, in the tale he tells Redcrosse we learn how he entered into that place:

I lately chaunst (Would I had neuer chaunst)
 With a faire knight to keepen companee,
Sir Terwin hight, that well himselfe aduaunst
 In all affaires, and was both bold and free,
 But not so happie as mote happie bee:
 He lou'd, as was his lot, a Ladie gent,
 That him againe lou'd in the least degree:
 For she was proud, and of too high intent,
 And ioyd to see her louer languish and lament.

From whom returning sad and comfortlesse,
 As on the way together we did fare,
 We met that villen (God from him me blesse)
 That cursed wight, from whom I scapt whyleare,
 A man of hell, that cals himselfe *Despaire* (1.ix.27–28)

60 Lakoff – Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh* 177.

61 Ibid. 179–203.

Here we have a complex presentation of a kind of causation. Similar to 'Change is Motion' another primary metaphor is at work: 'A Line of Thought is Following a Path'. In this sense Terwin's disposition—'sad and comfortlesse'—places him on a trajectory, a path, toward Despair, the motion toward the vice figuring forth a change into the state itself, the arrival at despair.

The rest of the episode chronicles Redcrosse's movement toward, arrival and experience at, and escape from the place of Despair. Unlike Trevisan, who by chance and by his accompanying one who was unknowingly—through frustrated love—on a path toward Despair, Redcrosse purposely sets out to find and defeat him. His motivation for doing so, a motivation rooted in his fundamental misunderstanding of the peril that would be involved, can be understood in terms of the blending of cultural frames. In the cultural frame associated with chivalry and the world of knights errant, fear is '[i]n fowle reproch of knighthoods faire degree' or, as Redcrosse notes, 'misseeming'—that is, unbecoming of a knight. A more fitting response is to seek out and challenge such an enemy. Redcrosse's eagerness to find Despair, however, is joined with a misunderstanding of the threat he poses. After Trevisan communicates the story of how Despair persuaded Terwin and almost persuaded himself to suicide, Redcrosse—drawing on the cultural frame whereby enemies wield physical weapons and are overpowered with strength, martial prowess, and courage—seems perplexed by the effect of Despair's *charmed speeches*. Thus, he wonders, 'How may a man (said he) with idle speech / Be wonne to spoyle the Castle of his health?' (1.ix.31, 1–2). Operating from the cultural frame of chivalry and knighthood, he assumes that the foe he seeks can be beaten through physical strength and that he is well protected against whatever 'idle speech' he may encounter.

In Terwin and Trevisan's encounter with Despair, we also see Despair in terms of the cultural frame of knighthood: an unarmed man pleasantly greeting and inquiring about the two knights. According to the cultural frame with which the pair conceptualize their environment, an unarmed man on foot conveying and seeking news from abroad does not pose a threat and is, rather, putting himself at the mercy of the two armed, mounted knights. What they fail, thus, to recognize is his threat as an enemy. The strangeness of Despair's placement within the cultural frame of knighthood and chivalry is further conveyed in a shift of primary metaphor. Here, the power of Despair's rhetoric is rendered in terms of taking and giving:

With wounding words and termes of foule repleife,
He pluckt from vs all hope of due reliefe,
That earst vs held in loue of lingring life;

Then hopeless hartlesse, gan the cunning thiefe
 Perswade vs die, to stint all further strife:
 To me he lent this rope, to him a rustie knife.

With which sad instrument of hastie death [the knife],
 That wofull louer, loathing lenger light,
 A wide way made to let forth liuing breath.
 But I more fearefull, or more luckie wight,
 Dismayd with that deformed dismall sight,
 Fled-fast away, halfe dead with dying feare:
 Ne yet assur'd of life by you, Sir knight,
 Whose like infirmitie like chaunce may beare:
 But God you neuer let his charmed speeches heare. (1.ix.29–30)

In contrast to the primary metaphor that would be most applicable to scenes of battle, 'Causes are Forces', here the distinct threat posed by Despair—a threat also evoking the host-guest frame, whereby Despair acts as a perverse host who gives his guests not nourishment but the instruments of their own demise—dramatizes the primary metaphor 'Causation is Transfer of Possession'. In addition, not only do we see a heightened use of aural grouping in the alliteration and consonance, which is intensified in this stanza ('louer, loathing lenger light [...] liuing breath [...] luckie wight, wofull louer [...] wide way made, Dismayd with that deformed dismall sight, dead with dying feare'), but we also see once again the importance of movement. To enter the place of despair is to lose one's agency to the figure Despair; to leave the place is to change out of that state. The animated, personified figure represents the agency of the location, the state itself.

The complexity of the primary metaphors and cultural frames mentioned above, a complexity rooted to embodied experience, heightens our attention and expectation as Redcrosse, also misrecognizing the threat of Despair, pledges his determination to defeat the vice. As Redcrosse sets out to find Despair, he is moving into the state itself. As with the initial description of Trevisan, whose fear was announced before his physical features described, the description of Despair's dwelling first provides a general interpretation before showing specific details:

Ere long they come, where that same wicked wight
 His dwelling has, low in an hollow caue,
 Farre vnderneath a craggie clift ypight,
 Darke, dolefull, drearie, like a greedie graue,

That still for carrion carcases doth craue:
 On top whereof aye dwelt the ghastly Owle,
 Shrieking his balefull note, which euer draue
 Farre from that haunt all other chearefull fowle;
 And all about it wandring ghostes did waile and howle. (1.ix.33).

Though a cave itself often, especially in *The Faerie Queene*, signifies danger or sin, a series of aural groupings ('Darke, dolefull, drearie, like a greedie graue, / That still for carrion carcases doth craue') make the connection explicit. What follows is a peak shift effect as the place is rendered a super stimulus for desolation and death, beginning in the stanza above with the description of animate (and vocal) creatures: the owl (a bird of ill omen) with his 'balefull note', and the ghosts who 'waile and howle'. The super stimulus continues with a description of barely living or dead things:

And all about old stockes and stubs of trees,
 Whereon nor fruit, nor leafe was euer seene,
 Did hang vpon the ragged rocky knees;
 On which had many wretches hanged beene,
 Whose carcases were scattered on the greene,
 And throwne about the cliffs. (1.ix.34)

Even without considering the biblical allusion to trees that do not bear fruit, the imagery here enhances the general impression: Death figures most prominently as the cave itself now is not simply gaping 'like a greedie graue, / That still for carrion carcases doth craue'; rather, the surrounding landscape is itself both a place where people die and a kind of unfinished grave, where dead bodies lie as gruesome foliage. As with the depiction of Sir Trevisan's fear, a peak shift effect renders the cave and its surrounding landscape a super stimulus for desolation and death.

It is in this mental state that we meet Despair himself. Because the episode is structured on a movement to and from a location, the moment when Despair is presented is more salient. The journey leads to the moment—the movement to the place arrested by Redcrosse's arrival—when we are presented with the personified figure. In this way, the episode directs our attention to this iconic image, which as a basic-level category subsumes or consolidates the emotional charge of the surrounding events. Despair appears through another peak-shift description, drawing on conventional imagery. He shows himself as overly introspective as his body is wracked by neglect and the thoughts that consume him:

That darkesome caue they enter, where they find
 That cursed man, low sitting on the ground,
 Musing full sadly in his sullein mind;
 His grieslie lockes, long growen, and vnbound,
 Disordred hong about his shoulders round,
 And hid his face; through which his hollow eyne
 Lookt deadly dull, and stared as astound;
 His raw-bone cheekes through penurie and pine,
 Were shronke into his iawes, as he did neuer dine.

His garment nought but many ragged clouts,
 With thornes together pind and patched was,
 The which his naked sides he wrapt abouts;
 And him beside there lay vpon the gras
 A drearie corse, whose life away did pas,
 All wallowd in his owne yet luke-warme blood,
 That from his wound yet welled fresh alas;
 In which a rustie knife fast fixed stood,
 And made an open passage for the gushing flood. (1.ix.35–36)

As with previous scenes, peak shift and aural grouping figure prominently in this image. Though I have been drawing primarily on aesthetic universals and theories of conceptual metaphor, it is worth pointing out here that the depiction of Despair also would seem to evoke embodied mechanisms giving rise to empathy when a reader or viewer encounters the image of a human body. David Freedberg and Vittorio Gallese, for example, have shown that our visceral reactions to powerful images involve our physically taking on the role of the person we observe: ‘felt physical responses to works of art are so often located in the part of the body that is shown to be engaged in purposive physical actions [that] one might feel that one is copying the gestures and movements of the image one sees—even in cases where the action seems to serve as the outlet for an emotional response (as with scenes of mourning and lamentation, for example)’.⁶² In *The Faerie Queene*, the mental wasting caused by Despair is depicted in his associated objects (tattered clothes, a corpse, a rusty knife) and in biological clues: He is crouched on the ground with grisly locks hanging over his face, eyes staring dully and raw, sunken cheeks emphasizing his body’s lack of nourishment ‘as if he did neuer dine’. These biological cues rendered through a peak shift effect make for an emotionally salient image.

62 Freedberg – Gallese, “Motion, Emotion and Empathy” 200.

This salient image could further be described, following Lakoff and Johnson, as a basic-level category: a concept rendered at the optimal level of specificity (not too general, as ‘Vice’, which cannot be embodied in a specific image, and not too specific, as ‘the variant of despair experienced by lovers’ which would need to be rendered in too complex detail). As a basic-level category, this image of Despair is more easily remembered and more easily used for higher-order reasoning.⁶³

This personification is a relatively simple but emotionally striking image that helps consolidate complex theological, rhetorical, and philosophical insights into the nature of despair, both in its universal sense and in its Protean appearances in everyday life. The depiction of Despair in this arrangement—a movement toward and from a location where we see the personified figure himself in a climactic moment—is important because it allows us to remember our encounter with him as an event. Although the exact workings of memory are still not entirely known, standard connectionist models posit that memory and knowledge are constituted in the weights between neuronal connections; memory constitutes knowledge as our memories influence changes in the very connections used for processing information. In this view, the relationship between short-term (hippocampus) and long-term memory (neocortex) is complementary, with vivid events leading to immediate, large-scale weight changes in the hippocampus. As an event is recalled and the hippocampal patterns are reinstated, similar patterns in the neocortex are re-activated, allowing for a slower ‘interleaving’ of weight changes in neocortical structures (the place of long-term memory) which are also used to process information. While this neocortical interleaving is often a very slow process, sometimes taking years, more rapid changes in the neocortex can occur when new memories are consistent with prior knowledge.⁶⁴ In short, the more vivid the memory, the more likely we are to replay it and the more likely it is to become interwoven into our neocortical structures, especially if it is consistent with pre-existing domains. Thus, the Despair episode by directing our attention toward the personified

63 Lakoff – Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh* 26–30.

64 McClelland J., “Memory as a Constructive Process: The Parallel-Distributed Processing Approach”, in Nalbantian S. – Matthews P. – McClelland J., *The Memory Process: Neuroscientific and Humanistic Perspectives* (Cambridge, MA: 2011) 129–151; McClelland J., “Incorporating Rapid Neocortical Learning of New Schema-Consistent Information into Complementary Learning Systems Theory”, *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General* 142.4 (2013) 1190–1210; McClelland J. – McNaughton B. – O’Reilly R.C., “Why There Are Complementary Learning Systems in the Hippocampus and Neocortex: Insights from the Successes and Failures of Connectionist Models of Learning and Memory”, *Psychological Review* 102 (1995) 419–457.

figure and heightening our emotional responses through aesthetic universals creates a more memorable encounter, an encounter that when recalled could trigger associations with events occurring both earlier and later in the episode, such as Despair's theological arguments and Redcrosse's salvation through Una's intervention. But it is the personified figure of Despair crouched over the body of Terwin that anchors these associations as the reader's corpus of knowledge related to despair is compressed and blended⁶⁵ into this vivid image.

Conclusion

Spenser's depiction of the personified figure Despair engages the reader in multiple ways. Despair is an emotionally striking image, his body rendered through a peak shift effect. As a static figure encountered in one of the text's iconic moments, the personification constrains abstract ideas to a physical space, one organized through projection, the knife and corpse accompanying him. As a dynamic character in the narrative of Redcrosse, Despair is both subject and master of his dwelling place, the abstract features of the vice organized through spatial logic whereby states are rendered metaphorically as locations and changes as motion to and from a location. More important, however, is not how various elements work in isolation but how a layering of aesthetic appeals joined with representations drawing on embodied cognitive systems may be responsible for the entrenchment of personal, cultural, philosophical, and theological knowledge that, over time, may be variously recreated, re-deployed, and reformulated as the personified image is brought to memory. In this way, recent advancements in the neuro- and cognitive sciences suggest not so much that the study of art and literature is best left to the scientists, but rather that scientists would do well to recognize that, as messages appealing to the fullest most intricate capacities of our cognitive processes, art and literature must stand alongside scientific description as powerful, legitimate sources of knowledge.

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65 Fauconnier – Turner, *The Way We Think* 89–96.

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PART 2

Personification and the Critical Tradition



Dante and St. Francis: Shaping Lives, Reshaping Allegory

Jeremy Tambling

Francis of Assisi and Dante make a fascinating comparison in the ways they shape understandings of the human; and Dante's *Commedia* (c. 1310–1321) writes about Francis in a canto of *Paradiso* which is both one of the most attractive of the poem, and also interesting in its reading of the significance of Francis' life. It is also crucial for understanding allegory as seen in various forms of personification, and for seeing how allegory, far from having the force of abstraction, increases the power of affect. The implications of this I will develop, by giving a reading of the canto, but the direction of the argument should be plain: in presenting the historical Francis, he is made to personify both Poverty and Christ, but in a way that suggests that not even Christ can be given a single or definitive identity: personification here makes everything double, and richer.

Dante's St. Francis

In his first published work on Dante, *Dante als Dichter der irdischen Welt* (1929), Erich Auerbach commented on St. Francis' historical importance 'for the renewal of imagination and sensibility in Europe'.¹ Part of Francis's significance was to give an increased, broadened sense of the power of the power of the human, which showed in both expressive writing and art, and in the sense of religion being made vernacular (Italian rather than Latin), and in the significance of the Franciscans becoming 'urban apostles', whose writings indicated a 'new bourgeois spirituality'.² John White suggests a new spatial awareness arising in and from the art which painted the life of St. Francis.³ Francis and the Franciscans gave rise to a new sense of the power of affect, and that

1 Auerbach E., *Dante: Poet of the Secular World*, trans. R. Manheim (Chicago: 1961) 26.

2 Fleming J.V., *An Introduction to the Franciscan Literature of the Middle Ages* (Chicago: 1977) 15, 22, 256.

3 White J., *The Birth and Rebirth of Pictorial Space* (London: 1957) 23–56.

compares to something observable within Dante: everything in the *Commedia* notes how the human may be described in terms of an affectual state whose richness exceeds, and questions, the place that each individual soul is assigned within the order given in *Commedia*'s Inferno, or in its Purgatory or Paradise.⁴ Francis of Assisi, in whom this affect, erotic in intensity, is also an instance of folly, the folly of allowing affect to dominate, is Dante's subject in the Heaven of the Sun, the fourth of the heavens through which he has passed (the Moon, Mercury, Venus, being the first three). The Sun is given over to the souls of the wise (*Paradiso* canto 10 to canto 14 line 81). Here, for the first time, no people are visible, only lights, in which the actual souls are hidden. A first group of twelve wise figures, all flames of light, circles round him, led by Thomas Aquinas; they are examples of the learned from the history of Judaism and from Christianity. Aquinas speaks about the contemporary decay of the Dominican order, to which he belongs, and describes the life of Francis of Assisi. The enlargement of emotion, which Auerbach speaks of, shows when Aquinas speaks of a leader—Francis—whom he historically had nothing to do with; might, indeed, have been antipathetic to because of his stress on the emotional as opposed to the intellectual life. A second circle of lights follows, led by the Franciscan Bonaventura who eulogises Dominic, and speaks of the loss of vision in his own Dominican order, and introduces each of the twelve lights flaming around him.

Aquinas says, in a riddling form, using the biblical image of sheep and shepherd, that he was one of the lambs of the sacred flock—the Dominican order of friars—which Dominic leads on the road 'where one may fatten well, if one does not stray off' ('u' ben s'impingua se non si vaneggia'; 10.69).⁵ That qualification is an enigma, partly because it asks implicitly what straying off might mean; and an enigma could be counted as a form of allegory. Aquinas also makes a puzzling comment about Solomon, the fifth of the lights he has introduced, and glosses that in canto 13. In canto 11, after he has gone round the circle of the twelve, completing his introduction, he notes that Dante is in doubt—'tu dubbi' (11.2)—a word whose etymology implies that Dante is thinking doubly—and that he wants to understand 'in such open and extended discourse' ('in sì aperta e 'n sì distesa lingua'; 11.23), what Thomas means by these two gnomic statements. He then begins on the first, not by explaining, but

4 I discuss this in Tambling J., *Dante in Purgatory: States of Affect* (Turnhout: 2010).

5 Quotations from Dante are taken from Dante Alighieri, *Commedia*, ed. A.M. Chivacci Leonardi, 3 vols. (Bologna: 2001). Translations are mine.

by telling a story. Divine providence which rules with wisdom, ordained two guides for the church, one seraphic in 'ardore', in warmth—'seraph' implies 'burning'—and one whose wisdom makes him a cherubic light in 'splendore'. Francis and Dominic are indicated, and connected by the rhyme. These guides were intended for the bride of Him 'who with high cries [i.e. on the Cross] espoused her with his blessed blood' ('ch'ad alter grida / disposò lei col sangue benedetto'). The Passion is, then, presented as an erotic experience, and the loud cry on the cross, 'Consummatum est' ('It is finished'; *John* 19:30), acquires another, sexual meaning: that Christ and the Church are for ever united, so that the task now within the Church, and particularly assigned to Francis and Dominic, is to increase the bride's desire, a point already made through an erotic image at the end of the previous canto, where the twelve souls in a circle are compared to a mechanical clock which calls us in the hour (dawn) when 'the bride of God' ('la sposa di Dio'; 10.140) rises to sing an aubade to the Bridegroom so that he may love her, the mechanism pushing and pulling and sounding the bell so sweetly 'that the well-disposed spirit swells with love' ('che'l ben disposto spirto d'amor turge'; 10.144). 'Turge' is sexual, and the imagery suggests that these twelve male spirits, who have already been compared to dancing women (10.79) cross gender: this wooing of the other is male to female and female to male in a way which questions sexual difference, just as the periphrases within Aquinas's discourse put the literal and the allegorical (God, Christ, the Church, Francis and Dominic) together in undifferentiated form.

Aquinas says that he will speak of one of these two guides (40–42): if he spoke of one, he would actually speak of both. The point is more than rhetorical politeness; it recalls the definition of allegory as speaking other; to speak of one person *is* to speak of another, because allegory is a mode whose literality allows a perception of meaning as other than single. The one whom Aquinas will speak of is Francis, and he then turns to literal detail in giving his biography, starting at line 43, closing at line 117. Then, completing the canto, line 118 immediately switches to speaking of Dominic, as a worthy colleague to Francis, so suddenly that identities are hard to distinguish. He says that the Dominicans as a flock have wandered off from the rules of their order, and in doing so, are no longer fattened; finishing the canto with the same enigmatic line which had appeared in 10.69, and which was half-quoted in 11.25. The implications of the statement are only explained by talking about something else, which is the definition of allegory, but that means that we can only approach the implications of the statement at the end discourse about Francis.

“Figura”: Auerbach and St. Francis

The outstanding commentary on this canto is Auerbach's, in “St Francis of Assisi in Dante's *Commedia*” (1944).⁶ His essay is part of a rich body of writings about Dante, already referred to: it started in 1929 and continued through the chapter on *Inferno* canto 10 which appeared in *Mimesis* (1953). That was paralleled, in the time of writing both essays during the Second World War, by another essay “Figura” (1944), to which *Mimesis* refers. *Mimesis* and “Figura” give important clues for Auerbach's approach to allegory, and the essay on St. Francis shows the outworking of his method. It may be argued that Auerbach's sense of figuralism is richer and has more potential for reading the poem than that which has prevailed in the United States, which remained with a more conventional sense of allegory derived from Charles Singleton. The question Singleton raised was between the distinction between the ‘allegory of poets’ and the ‘allegory of theologians’ which Dante himself draws: which does Dante practise? And, if he writes ‘the allegory of theologians’, does that mean he is committed to a belief in the literal truth of his own allegory?⁷ Auerbach's work avoids such positivist speculation. He argues instead for an increasing realism in figuralism. Dante works with this, which means that people on earth are the shadows of what they become in their ‘afterlife’, whether that is in *Inferno*, Purgatory, or Paradise.⁸ The essence of their being appears now in more clarity than it could be in life, so that Dante's writing is not allegorical in the sense that, say, the figures in *Le Roman de la Rose* are, in that form of personification: i.e. naming people by single specific emotional states from which they cannot move, and which generalise them. Rather, personifications in Dante imply people at the height of their individualism, but still in process of becoming different, which has implications for the way that any writing now must attend to the ‘secular world’, giving it full attention, not thinking of it in the abstract terms of

6 Auerbach E., *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature*, Theory and History of Literature 9 (New York: 1959); “Figura” (11–78) was translated by Ralph Manheim, “St Francis” (79–100) by Catherine Garvin.

7 For Auerbach, see Tambling J., *Allegory* (London: 2010) 33–36. For a summary of Dante on allegory, see Haller R.S. (ed.), *Literary Criticism of Dante Alighieri* (Lincoln, NA: 1973) 95–130. For Singleton on allegory, see, for instance, Singleton C.S., “In Exitu Israel de Aegypto”, in Freccero J. (ed.), *Dante: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: 1965) 102–121; and, of course, his edition of the *Commedia*: Dante Alighieri, *Commedia*, trans. C.S. Singleton, 3 vols. (Cambridge, MA: 1973). For an application of Singleton, Hollander R., *Allegory in Dante's Commedia* (Princeton, NJ: 1969).

8 See Charity A., *Events and their Afterlife: The Dialectics of Christian Typology in the Bible and Dante* (Cambridge: 1996).

allegory, which is premised on a dualistic sense of the secular being unimportant in comparison to the spiritual world.

Auerbach's commentary begins with the oddness that Dante does not meet Francis of Assisi in the *Commedia*, as he does others even more famous than Francis in different spheres of life, including the church. Instead, as with Dominic in the following canto, Francis is spoken about, not seen. The man, and the life, become a text, taking further *Paradiso's* mode of presenting lives by making the people disappear from sight. It is as though a greater reality was to be found in thinking of Francis' life in textual terms, whose essence is to signify, beyond the literalism of personification, and they further exemplify Auerbach's commanding thesis, that Francis becomes figural of Christ; or rather, that what is said of Christ may be said with greater reality about Francis, because what is said now belongs to the context of the secular world. And writing the life of Francis, as Dante does, through imagining and creating the words of Thomas, does not produce realism as something literal, rather, it engenders a further allegory and allegorisation.

Auerbach's argument finds support in how Francis became the substance of legend and allegorisation immediately after his death, in official biographies, such as those by Thomas of Celano, whose first version appeared in 1229 and its later versions in the 1240s; and, in 1263, Bonaventura of Bagnoregio's *Major Legend of Saint Francis* (the *Legenda Maior*).⁹ Bonaventura, general of the Franciscan order after 1257, of course, speaks the eulogy to Dominic in canto 12. The Franciscans became popular: the first Franciscan Pope, Nicholas IV, was elected in 1288, dying in office in 1292: Nicholas, whom Dante damns (see *Inferno* 19), had been Bonaventura's successor as general of the Franciscan order. And Celestine V, Nicholas's successor, Pope for a few months in 1294, was also a Franciscan. Alongside the narrative legends, plentiful visualisations of Francis appeared, for instance, in the St. Francis Dossal, dating to about 1250, which was made to decorate a family funerary chapel and which is now in the Bardi chapel in Santa Croce, the Franciscan church in Florence. Here Francis is seen full-length, his right hand raised in a gesture of blessing which equates with Christ. Dante would surely have seen this.¹⁰ And amongst many visual images of Francis and his life, there were the 28 highly naturalistic

9 See Robson M.G.P. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Francis of Assisi* (Cambridge: 2012). For a modern biography without hagiography, see Thompson A., *Francis of Assisi: A New Biography* (Ithaca: 2012). On Francis' afterlife, see Brooke R.B., *The Image of St Francis: Responses to Sainthood in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: 2006).

10 For the Bardi Dossal, see Havely N., *Dante and the Franciscans: Poverty and the Papacy in the Commedia* (Cambridge: 2004) 135–137, 190–191 (and see Havely's treatment of Francis

and expressive frescoes painted on the walls of the nave in the basilica of San Francesco in Assisi, which was built to honour the canonisation of Francis in 1228 and completed by 1239. The frescoes, attributed by Vasari to Giotto, but which were rather, it seems, the work of several other hands, may have been the work of the 1290s to the 1300s. Amongst other commentators, Alastair Smart distinguishes the work of the of St. Cecilia, the St. Francis Master, the Master of the Obsequies of St. Francis, and sees a relationship between these and the Isaac Master, represented elsewhere in the nave.¹¹ We shall return to these frescoes. Giotto, first recorded in relation to Florence in 1301, and the subject of Dante's praise in *Purgatorio* 11.94–96, as being the successor to Cimabue, contributed more than once to the legend of St. Francis, so that as an artist he could even be said to have been created by it. He and his workshop created a panel of the Stigmatization of St. Francis for the church of St. Francesco in Pisa, with three scenes from the life in the predella below: the Dream of Innocent III, of the man (Francis) supporting the church in collapse; the sanctioning of the rule, and the preaching to the birds (not a topic for Dante). The panel, which seems to follow on from Assisi, is now in the Louvre.¹² Giotto also produced seven frescoes to the Bardi Chapel in Santa Croce, probably between 1310 and 1319, or perhaps later still: the Stigmatization, and six smaller works (the Renunciation of Earthly Goods; the Confirmation of the Rule; the Appearance at Arles; St. Francis Before the Sultan; Death and Ascension of St. Francis; Vision of the Ascension of St. Francis). Here, Giotto condenses different images from the Assisi frescoes into a complex set of frescoes where several things are happening in one fresco: narrative is being drawn tighter. The Francis seems less mystical in the Bardi chapel, with no posthumous miracles being shown, and with visionary experiences associated with him reduced from the Assisi basilica nine to two.¹³ These Bardi frescoes would have been too late for Dante, by then exiled from Florence, to see them, though he could have

in *Paradiso* 11, 123–180). See also Goffen R., *Spirituality in Conflict: Saint Francis and Giotto's Bardi Chapel* (University Park, PA: 1988).

- 11 See Smart A., *The Assisi Problem and the Art of Giotto: A Study of the Legend of St Francis in the Upper Church of San Francesco, Assisi* (Oxford: 1971). Henceforth, Smart, plus page-reference. For a recent statement of the controversy, see Zanardi B., "Giotto and the St Francis Cycle at Assisi", in Derbes A. – Sandona M. (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Giotto* (Cambridge: 2004) 32–62.
- 12 See Smart, *The Assisi Problem* 109–117; and Cook W.R., "Giotto and the Figure of St Francis", in Derbes – Sandona, *The Cambridge Companion to Giotto* 135–156.
- 13 Smart, *The Assisi Problem* 114–117; Cook, "Giotto and the Figure of St Francis" 142–156, esp. 144–145.

seen the frescoes of the Assisi basilica. He could also have seen Giotto's work in the Scrovegni chapel in Padua (1304–1306).¹⁴

In Smart's study, whose agenda is to suggest the existence of another Florentine tradition of art independent of the Cimabue / Giotto line which Dante speaks of, and one which owes more to a Roman tradition associated with Cavallini, parallels between different scenes in the life of Francis are constantly referred to. They make one incident prefigure another, in Auerbach's sense of that term, while parallels are stressed between these scenes and the life of Christ prefigured in Old and New Testament scenes also depicted in the nave, bringing out the point that Francis was seen as another Christ, made so by his poverty, his miracles, and outstandingly his stigmata. Another art critic, Anne Derbes, bringing out how the Franciscans in the thirteenth century encouraged an art which narrated the Passion of Christ—another aspect of the emotional and affectual intensity which Francis brought about—shows how the Franciscans modified the details of the Passion to make it speak more of Francis, and constructed a life of Francis to fit the Passion.¹⁵

An outstanding example of figural art appears in the first fresco of the St. Francis series in Assisi [Fig. 2.1], which Smart attributes to the St. Cecilia Master, an artist indebted to the Roman tradition. Smart considers it the most daring and revolutionary in the cycle: 'never before had sacred legend been given a local habitation as it had here: never before had a painter dared to represent [...] the familiar aspect of the contemporary scene'.¹⁶ he notes too that it is placed in geographical symmetry with the last of the series, which is a representation of Rome, also by the St. Cecilia Master. Assisi fulfils what Rome, symbolised by the appearance in the picture of Trajan's column, stands for; or, reading in reverse, which is equally possible, Rome is, in four-fold allegory, the anagogical fulfilment of Assisi, just as the heavenly Rome—Dante's theme—is the anagogical fulfilment of the earthly Rome. Yet the salient point is the rarity of using an actual building in art: for James Stubblebine, it defines a realism which he sees as differentiating it from Giotto, and it becomes 'vernacular art'.¹⁷

14 On Dante and the Assisi frescoes, see Herzman R.B., "I Speak Not Yet of Proof": Dante and the Art of Assisi", in Crook W.R. (ed.), *The Art of the Franciscan Order in Italy* (Leiden: 2005) 189–210.

15 Derbes A., *Picturing the Passion in Late Medieval Italy: Narrative Painting, Franciscan Ideologies, and the Levant* (Cambridge: 1996) 22.

16 Smart A., *The Dawn of Italian Painting: 1250–1400* (London: 1978) 231–232.

17 Stubblebine J.H., *Assisi and the Rise of Vernacular Art* (New York: 1985) 108–109. Stubblebine dates the frescoes to the 1330s and makes them a response to Giotto, but see White J., "The Date of the 'Legend of St Francis' at Assisi", *Burlington Magazine* 98,643 (1956) 344–351 for a *terminus post quem* of 1307.



FIGURE 2.1 *Giotto (also attributed to the St. Cecilia Master), Scenes from the Life of St. Francis: Homage of a Simpleton. Fresco. Assisi, Church of San Francesco.*
IMAGE © SCALA ARCHIVES, FLORENCE.

Smart calls it 'the first modern street scene in European art'.¹⁸ Like others in the series, it is dependent on Bonaventura's *Legenda Maior*, and Smart cites the relevant passage:

A certain man from Assisi, who was held to be of great simplicity of mind, but who was yet inspired by God, whenever he met [the young] Francis going through the city, would take off his cloak and spread the garment before his feet, declaring that Francis was worthy of all reverence, as one who before long would perform great works, and that by reason of this he should be splendidly honoured by all the faithful.¹⁹

The episode reads as an instance of what Erasmus would call the praise of folly. The holy fool greets Francis, another holy fool, and gives him honour saying that this is what Francis will have; in that way, the symbolism of laying down the cloak anticipates the literal reality which will follow when Francis is canonised (the canonisation is shown in fresco no. 24). The picture, like the inspired fool—his inspiration his folly, and his folly his inspiration—is a forerunner in every sense. He preludes the career of Francis, and his fame; he suggests what his character is and will be, and shows a transformed Assisi. The fresco shows Francis in profile and already aureoled, so that the picture shows what is not yet literally true. He is stepping out from the left with two people behind him. The cloak lies in the middle of the ground in the picture's centre, the holy fool is on his knees to the right, in the action of laying it down; behind him stand two other men. The building in the centre of the picture, behind the cloak, is the Roman Temple of Minerva, and that to the left is the Torre del Commune in Pisa.²⁰ The Master of St. Cecilia has taken the old Roman facade with its six Corinthian pillars supporting the pediment, and made them five, a symbolic number in Christianity. He has also graced the pediment with a rose window whose roundness echoes the aureole, and with sculpted angels who are shown on either side of this window. The classical has become Gothic, as if the Gothic was to be seen as a fulfilment of the Roman, or Romanesque: the same has happened to the actual Romanesque windows of the Torre del Commune, which are now Gothic, while the tower itself, under which Francis is positioned, has lost its battlements, so that it resembles the campanile of a church. The Roman temple has become a Christian edifice in a form of anagogical allegory, and it stands so centrally within the picture, three steps high,

18 Smart, *The Dawn of Italian Painting* 33.

19 Ibid. 263.

20 See Ibid. Frontispiece and Plate 41.

and with a marble flooring, as an invitation to the picture: in such ways, architecture becomes allegory, and the secular world (the Torre, the pagan temple and the houses to the right of the picture) becomes an image of how honour is paid in the divine world. And in the following fresco, which Smart attributes to the St. Francis Master, the laying down of the cloak is succeeded by Francis now outside Assisi, seen on rocks to the left, giving his mantle to a beggar, apparently an impoverished knight; the art works by means of parallels, and the holy fool of the first picture becomes Francis the holy fool in the next, leading on to the renunciation of worldly wealth in the fifth fresco; Francis has returned his clothes to his father.

Adornment and Allegorisation

The sharpest comment on the significance of how Francis's life has been adorned by its legends and its art, adornment meaning allegorisation, comes from an unexpected source, Nietzsche, in *The Antichrist* (1888), whose topic is resistance to the literalisation of interpretation of Christianity.²¹ He takes Christ as an anarchic figure, and as ambiguous—a word often recurring in Nietzsche's text—as a 'great symbolist', taking all that is natural, temporal, spatial and historical as 'signs, as occasions for similes'.²² Christ is a symbolist, by which may be understood an allegorist in Walter Benjamin's sense; allegory not presupposing, as Romantic symbolism does, a direct and natural correspondence between what is evoked as a symbol, and the reality of which it speaks.²³ The fault of Ernest Renan (1823–1892), whom Nietzsche refers to, is to attempt to systematise the four gospels into a single biography; in this, Nietzsche partially contrasts him with David Strauss (1808–1874), whom he says he read when he was twenty. Nietzsche writes: 'Of what account are the contradictions of "tradition" to me? How can legends of saints be called "tradition" at all? The stories of saints are the most ambiguous literature that exists' (28.98), not to be subjected to the positivism of scientific methods. Section 29 opens:

What is of account to *me* is the psychological type of the Saviour. For it *might* be contained in the Gospels, in spite of the Gospels, however much it might be mutilated or overloaded with strange features: as that of

21 See Shapiro G., *Nietzschean Narratives* (Bloomington: 1989) 124–141.

22 Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, section 34, in Nietzsche F., *Twilight of the Idols and The Antichrist*, trans. Th. Common (New York: 2004) 103. Further references by section and page, in text.

23 Benjamin W., *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. J. Osborne (London: 1977) 163–182.

Francis of Assisi is contained in his legends, in spite of the legends. *Not* the truth with regard to what he did, or said, or how he died exactly, but the question *whether* his type is at all representable now, whether it is 'handed down' to us (29.98).

The point is that both Christ and Francis break tradition, meaning traditional thought, which can cope with neither of them. The challenge within the Gospels, as in the Franciscan legends, is how to read them: not to see them as fragments out of which a coherent biography might be shaped, which would assume that both figures could be seen in the normative sense of modern psychology, but to see them as discontinuous fragments, which suggest infinite interpretations, and which are as fragmentary as allegory is in Benjamin's terms. The analogue for Nietzsche to Christ is *The Idiot* by Dostoevsky (31.100), which presents another holy fool, and in suggesting that, Nietzsche gives a clue as to how to read the polyphony for which Bakhtin makes Dostoevsky the exemplar; not as part of a single narrative which can be analysed for a single interpretation, but as part of life as not conforming to any single expectation, as Christ cannot be seen in terms of the 'antitheses' of a predetermined good and evil (32.100), but, as a symbolist, relativising 'every kind of expression, formula, law, belief or dogma [...] the whole of nature, language itself has for him merely the value of a sign or a simile' and 'the "knowledge" of Jesus is just the *pure folly* that there should be anything' of certain knowledge (32.101). Christianity is, for Nietzsche, a '*stupendous question-mark*' (36.104), bringing all certitudes into question, and the same point applies to Francis, who thus becomes a figure of Christ, in that he carries over the same mode of pointing beyond himself and hence beyond literalism, and attracts legends in the same way that Christ attracted gospels. Dante gives another allegorisation of Francis, and Thomas's narrative of his life becomes not a closing down of issues, but a further text, and the occasion for a different kind of writing from what has been presented thus far in the heaven of the sun. Not showing Francis' actual presence, he becomes an occasion for a series of similes and images which double themselves.

Aquinas on St. Francis

Thomas, then, begins with two rivers which meet, the Tupino, and another, the Chiascio, which falls from the hill chosen by the blessed Ubaldo Baldassini (1884–1160), who became Bishop of Gubbio. He says there hangs a fertile slope from a southward-facing mountain whose winds reach Perugia through its Porta Sole (Sun Gate), while behind the mountain Nocera and Gualdo suffer

from coldness. From where this slope most breaks its steepness, there was born into the world a 'sole', as this sun rises from the Ganges, a phenomenon apparent at the spring equinox, the beginning of the new year. So the place may be called, allegorising Assisi by wordplay, not 'Ascesi' ('I have risen') but 'Oriente', so keeping the image from the Ganges, and thinking of Francis as the angel 'ascending from the east having the seal of the living God' (*Revelation* 7:2). The 'seal' is the stigmata, so that Francis is always already marked, and in one way, has no history at all, being always the angel, and because he 'ascends' (notably, the angel does not descend) from the east, he makes Assisi an Orient. Such imagery comes first from Bonaventura's life of Francis, making Francis a figure to be venerated rather than to be imitated, and more, from the 'spiritual' Franciscans, Peter Olivi and his follower Ubertino da Casale.²⁴ These Franciscans insisted on the poverty of Francis and his order, and condemned its degeneration into materialism marked by great church buildings and by the insistence on position within the order. Ubertino's *Arbor vitae crucifixe Jesu Christi* (1305), leading into a comprehensive attack on the contemporary papacy of Boniface VIII, stressed Francis' marriage to Poverty, and they saw Francis and Dominic both in apocalyptic terms, as beginning the sixth age of the church; drawing this from the prophecies of Joachim of Fiore, who, of course, predated Francis.²⁵

The allegory stresses the affective, with the warmth of the sun; this 'sun' was not distant from his rising ('orto' from Latin 'orior', 'I rise up', thus continuing the 'Oriente' pun) but he made the earth feel this warmth, as if through a tremor was running through it, marking an absolute decisive historical change. Here, the image changes to another figure: that of courtly love, and marriage; being united, in the spiritual court (the presence of the bishop) and presence of his father (the Latin 'et coram patre', from *Matthew* 10:32–33, makes the whole process legal) with the woman 'to whom, as to death, no-one opens the gates of desire' ('a cui, come alla morte, / la porta del piacer nessun diserra'; 59–60). Auerbach interprets, I believe correctly: 'the opening of the gates of desire in the proper sense as a sexual act, and thus *porta* as the gateway to the feminine body'.²⁶ These gates of desire correspond to the Porta Sole in Perugia,

24 Burr D., *The Spiritual Franciscans: From Protest to Persecution in the Century After St Francis* (Philadelphia: 2001) 37. The book is largely an account of Ubertino da Casale.

25 See Gardner E., *Dante and the Mystics* (London: 1913) 184–264; and Davis C.T., *Dante and the Idea of Rome* (Oxford: 1957) 198–242. Both bring out specific debts to Ubertino. See also Davis's important reading of this canto in Davis C.T., *Dante's Italy and Other Essays* (Philadelphia: 1984) 42–70.

26 Auerbach, *Scenes* 88.

through which the influence of Assisi comes. The woman spoken of, whose identity is slowly revealed, has been bereaved of her first husband for more than 1100 years; i.e. from the time of Christ; she is despised, which, recalling the terms of *Isaiah* 53:3, makes her equivalent to Christ; she is an obscure old woman, until Francis stands before her without invitation from another. She is unwanted even though Lucan describes her as having been alone with the fisherman Amyclas, when Julius Caesar visited him and found him sleeping on a bed of seaweed: she is protecting the poor fisherman, Julius Caesar here being a more powerful form of the father against whom Francis went into 'guerra' (58); and Lucan comments: 'O safe the lot of a poor man's / life and humble home! O gods' gifts not yet / understood! Which temples or which walls / could enjoy this blessing, not to shake in panic / when Caesar's hand is knocking?'.²⁷ The image is followed by: 'And nothing availed her to have been so constant and undaunted that she, when Mary remained below, mounted the Cross with Christ' ('né valse esser costante né feroce, / sì che, dove Maria rimase giuso, / ella con Cristo pianse in su la croce'; 70–72)—reading 'salse' as some manuscripts do instead of 'pianse': 'she wept with Christ upon the cross'.²⁸

Auerbach stresses the sexual nature of the love which activates the wise in this heaven, already seen in canto 10.139–148, and the desire which must activate the 'sposa' of Christ who espoused her with his blood (11.31–33). The woman who is the personification of Poverty (73–75), seems to have sought sexual union with Christ on the cross, while Mary stayed below, she mounted, or wept, depending on the reading, on the cross itself in an act of closer identification than even Mary could make. The language derives from Ubertino: Gardner quotes:

when, by reason of the height of the Cross, even thine own Mother (who nevertheless alone did then faithfully worship Thee, and was joined by agonised love to Thy passion), even she, I say, and such a Mother, could not reach up to Thee; Lady Poverty with all her penury, as Thy most dear servitor, held Thee more than ever closely embraced, and was joined most intimately ['precordialibus'] to Thy sufferings.²⁹

27 Lucan, *The Civil War* 5. 528–531, trans. Susan H. Braund (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 99.

28 Petrocchi's edition, the standard for Sapegno, Bosco and Reggio and Leonardi, reads 'pianse'; Auerbach thinks this reading is a preference for 'good taste' (238). Auerbach's reading is also defended in Needler H., *Saint Francis and Saint Dominic in the Divine Comedy* (Krefeld: 1969).

29 Gardner *Dante and the Mystics* 235.

And the idea that she ascended is unconsciously borne out by Derbes, showing how Christ's voluntary ascent of the cross via the ladder was a Franciscan theme in art; Poverty only does what Christ did, in bounding up the ladder.³⁰

The two acts of Poverty present her as willingly courting shame, in relation to Amyclas, who, as a fisherman, prefigures Christ's disciples as to their first occupation (*Matthew* 4:18), and to Christ. But such loyalty counts for nothing until Francis appears, and takes her, repeating her previous acts of identification. At that point Thomas, who significantly had been attacked by Peter Olivi for his apparent down-grading of poverty, which was for Aquinas not a perfection in itself but only an instrument of perfection, now speaks plainly.³¹ He assigns Poverty the highest elevation, in what seems to be a palinode, retracting the position he held in life: 'But so that I should not proceed too darkly, take now, in my open speech, Francis and Poverty as these lovers' ('Ma perch'io non proceda troppo chiuso, / Francesco e Povertà per questi amanti / prendi oramai nel mio parlar diffuso'; 73–75).

This is the only time either figure is named; in what looks like a *catagchresis*, joining a literal identity with a personification, a point to be returned to. Francis marries Poverty, just as Poverty paradoxically gives something to the figure who is already poor. Masculinity and femininity combine; Francis, another Christ, another sun, personifies Poverty. Thomas explains his allegorical terms after language which shows that the male's active pursuit of the woman is the woman's active pursuit of the male. The result of such union makes such warmth, called 'love and wonder and joyful thoughts' ('amore e meraviglia e dolce sguardo') cause a new affect. That comes not from anything personal in Francis; rather it suggests that such an increased affect is discursive, marking a new imaginative awareness of poverty as an ideal which can be experienced as giving an emotional, indeed sexual satisfaction, because 'so does the bride delight' ('sí la sposa piace'; 84). Sexual satisfaction, it seems, is allegorical and it is attained through allegory. The increase spoken of is shown in how, spontaneously, Bernard and Egidio and Silvestro, early disciples,

30 Derbes, *Picturing the Passion* 154–156. For an illustration, see *ibid.* 148. She cites Bonaventura on Francis: 'he made a ladder by which he might mount up and embrace Him who is all-desirable' (156) and incidentally enables a connection to be made between this bounding up, and running (cp. *Paradiso* 11.59). Compare the Cistercian Adam of Perseigne (c. 1145–1221), writing to a nun on 'the merits of the cross': if you do not refuse to copulate with your husband [Christ] on such a bed you shall achieve one day the glory of a nuptial bed which knows nothing of cross or pain' (quoted in Fleming, *Franciscan Literature* 252).

31 Burr D., *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty* (Philadelphia: 1989) 48, 54–55.

named within the realism of the text, throw off their sandals to run faster after Francis (a literal act, the discarding of shoes becomes an allegorical one: they need to run) because the bride so delights. Another affective state appears in Francis: humility (87).³² It echoes *Purgatorio* 11, the parallel canto to this one whose subject is pride; Francis is seen in positive action in lines 85–87, going his way, while the following *terzina* takes the language applied to Poverty (the ‘né [...] né’ of lines 67 and 70) and applies it to Francis, adding ‘dispetto’ from line 65: ‘nor did the shame weigh down his brow [a contrast to the proud of *Purgatorio* 11 who are literally weighed down and bent over] that he was Pietro Bernardone’s son, nor to appear marvellously despised’ (‘né li gravo viltà di cuor le ciglia / per esser fi’ di Pietro Bernardone, / né per parer dispetto a maraviglia’; 88–90).

‘Maraviglia’ follows from line 77: the name of the father, an apparently second-class citizen, appears, like those of the first Franciscan disciples, to establish the historical truth of what was happening in Assisi: this is the marvellous in the real and it is immediately followed by the emphatically placed ‘royally’ (‘regalmente’; 91), which applies to how he appealed to Innocent III, also named, and received from him, in 1210, the first mark, or seal, of his religious order.

Naming the father, unnamed in line 59, completes the action described in lines 58 to 90, and leads to the second episode, in Rome; the second mark, in the third episode, comes from Honorius, in 1223, when ‘la gente poveralla’ (94) had so grown that Francis had to become the ‘chief shepherd’ (‘archimandrita’; 99). The fourth episode, or act (100–108), goes from the preaching of Christ and his disciples the ‘Soldan superba’: pride being noted here; and returned to Italy, to receive not the martyrdom he had wanted, but another sort: ‘on the bare rock between the Tiber and Arno, he received from Christ that final mark which for two years his body carried’ (‘nel crudo sasso intra Tevere ed Arno / da Cristo prese l’ultimo sigillo, / che le sue membra due anni portarno’; 106–108).

The rock (on Mount La Verna), which corresponds to Patmos, where St. John received the Apocalypse, is as poor as Francis; the hardness recalls ‘dura intenzione’ (91). The rock between two rivers parallels the description of the mountain where Francis was born, also between two rivers (43–45); likewise, the hermit Ubaldo, spoken of there, becomes a figure of Francis here, while Francis becomes a figure, a personification of Christ. Christ became flesh in the incarnation, but here the flesh is further marked with significance; blood-red, like

32 Derbes, *Picturing the Passion* 92, 133, notes the connection between the cord which Francis binds on himself and the new stress in pictures of the Passion on Christ being bound: one becomes an image of the other, and both a fulfilment of a figure in *Isaiah* 3:24.

the Papal seals, a richer form than those. And in Auerbach's terms, it makes Francis *more* than Christ, because it brings out what Christ bore in death; Francis carries the stigmata for two years; that 'two' ('due') relating to the two rivers, as if these were witnesses to Francis, as the two years witness to an extra hardness incurred through the 'ultimo sigillo'. Dante specifies Christ's appearance to Francis; in Bonaventura:

he saw a Seraph with six wings, flaming and resplendent, descending from the heights of heaven. And when in his most swift flight he had reached the space of air in the vicinity of the man of God, there appeared between his wings the image of a Crucified Man, having his hands and feet stretched out in the manner of a Cross and fastened to a Cross. Two wings were raised above his head and two spread out for flight, while two hid his whole body. Seeing this, Francis was mightily astonished, and joy, mingled with grief, possessed his heart. He rejoiced, that is, in the gracious aspect with which, as he perceived, he was regarded by Christ (in the guise of the Seraph).³³

Francis has already been identified as seraphic (37), which may be a narrative *prolepsis*, for he now becomes fully seraphic in his identification with Christ, who is also seraphic, in the moment of the stigmata. If Francis is Christ, as both Poverty, and as the Seraph, then identity and even the body, made feminine through its wounds, are not single, but exist in plurality, which means that *no* emotional, or affectual state is single either, even as gender cannot be marked off in single terms. And the five wounds which make up the stigmata are also marked in the 25 *terzine* which make up the account of Francis' life (43–117), five groups of five *terzine* each, going alongside the five acts in the life of Francis.

The following three *terzine* (109–117) complete the acts, with Francis' death, where he lays his body on the earth, making the language of *Genesis* 3:19 literal: 'dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return', and recalling the punishment of the avaricious in *Purgatorio* 19.232, who say, collectively, as they lie face-down on the ground, 'Adhaesit pavimento anima mea': 'My soul cleaveth to the dust' (*Psalms* 119:25). What appears as vision in *Purgatorio*, however intensely realised, becomes the increased reality, which still signifies, of the description of Francis. The signification is emotionally warm: he 'commends' ('raccomandò [...] comandò': 113–114) his loved woman, Poverty, to his 'frati';

33 Smart, *The Dawn of Italian Painting* 283.

the word, applied to the Friars, being literal, and dies in her arms, his soul departing from her 'bosom' ('grembo') which is the earth.

Having concluded the story, Thomas turns back immediately to Dominic, as a worthy colleague of Francis, but noting that his flock have gone after different pastures and return empty of milk. The more they get by going astray, the less they have; the language distantly echoes Virgil's comment on the she-wolf which impedes Dante in the opening of the *Commedia*: after feeding she is hungrier than before (*Inferno* 1.99). Sheep, in Thomas's puzzling terms, seem, then, to have the qualities of wolves. So the statement 'u'ben s'impingua, se non si vaneggia' (139) returns now, not explained, but as indirectly amplified by looking at the other case; the straying is from the rule which is of poverty, and the good fattening comes it seems, from adhering to that, as did Francis. As Nietzsche's entire third essay of *The Genealogy of Morals* explains and glosses an aphorism from *Zarathustra* which he puts as a heading to the essay, indicating how the earlier text ought to be read, so Aquinas takes virtually the entire canto to enlarge on his statement, but leaves it open, and implies that it can only be understood by taking everything of the Dominican order and thinking about it as though it was the Franciscan. The method of the canto is, then, not to divest itself of allegory, but to remember that whatever incites warmth of response comes from a language which does not cease to be a riddle. And the canto shows that Dante has understood Aquinas, for its first twelve lines concentrate on the irrelevant activities of humans on earth in comparison to what he was receiving in heaven.

Poverty Personified: Nakedness

'Emotional warmth', relating to the heaven of the Sun, and evocative of the fertile (Assisi is a 'fertile costa' (45); Francis's actions produce 'ben ferace!' (82)), associates with the eroticism with which Francis embraces Poverty as a figure of Christ and ends as the figure of Christ, with Christ's marks upon him. Such intensity of feeling links with the canto's stress upon nakedness, which contrasts with what has already been said about the adornment within allegorisation. In her essay on the canto, which largely defends, and expands, the sexual interpretations made by Auerbach, Marguerite Chiarenza says that Dante identifies Poverty with nakedness.³⁴ And nakedness, thus personified, is suggestive in relation to the canto's insistence on coldness: Perugia feeling

34 Chiarenza M.M., "Dante's Lady Poverty", *Dante Studies* 111 (1993) 153-175, esp. 164. She draws also on the nakedness and shame that the feminine figure of Justice has been

‘freddo e caldo’, and the towns behind Mount Subasio feeling cold; two of them, in a pattern of doubles seen throughout the canto, joined together in communal feeling.³⁵ The union with Poverty of lines 58–63 invokes the woman’s nakedness and is famously the occasion when Francis, as though mad, as the holy fool, undressed and returned his clothes to his father; as the *Legenda maior* 11.4 says:

as though made drunk by his wondrous fervour of spirit he cast aside even his breeches and made himself naked in the presence of all, saying to his father, ‘Hitherto I have called you my father on earth, but henceforth I can truly say, Our Father which art in heaven [...]’.³⁶

The woman is metaphorically naked in being deprived of her first husband, while the shameless identification which she made with Christ on the cross is with his nakedness. Smart notes nakedness as an interest appearing in then contemporary art, while Anne Derbes notes the stress on the nudity of Christ in Franciscan writings, and in the translucent loincloths that he is given to wear, as in the crucifixion by Cimabue in Santa Croce; the loincloth having replaced the colobium in eleventh-century art. Anne Derbes quotes Bonaventura: ‘since He desired to end His life in the nakedness of absolute poverty, he chose to hang unclothed upon the cross’—words almost applicable equally to Francis. And Derbes notes also the new emphasis on the voluntary self-stripping of Christ before ascending the cross in images of the Passion, and again connects this with Francis’s stripping.³⁷ In this attention to nakedness, there is a new affect, which Francis and Franciscanism has brought in, but it is also a new attention to figuralism; for the translucent loincloth only illustrates the point that nakedness even if presented, is still marked by a veil, which is the very symbol of allegory.³⁸

Poverty identifies with Christ as the naked fool, while Christ prefigures Francis, the naked fool, stripping to identify with Poverty in a chiasmic

reduced to in the *canzone* ‘Tre donne’, see ll. 28, 91, 92. See Foster K. – Boyde P., *Dante’s Lyric Poetry* (Oxford: 1967) no. 81.

35 See Vettori A., ‘Pax et Bonum: Dante’s Depiction of Francis of Assisi’, in S. Casciani (ed.), *Dante and the Franciscans* (Leiden: 2006) 289–306.

36 Smart, *The Dawn of Italian Painting* 266, pl. 48, 49.

37 Ibid. 165. Also see Derbes, *Picturing the Passion* 30–31, 200–202, with the bibliographical references given there, and 138. See also, more generally, Clark K., *The Nude* (Harmondsworth: 1960) 221–226.

38 On the veil of allegory, see Freccero J., *Dante: The Poetics of Conversion*, ed. R. Jacoff (Cambridge, MA: 1986) 119–135.

relationship which makes the episode in Assisi, the father now replacing Mary the mother, the realist outworking of the former episode, while this latter remains allegorical. Both the Assisi and Bardi frescoes of Francis' renunciation incorporate, in both cases on the left of the picture, children who are either ready, or attempting to stone Francis: an act of popular opposition which only adds to the identification of Francis with Christ.³⁹ Hence, too, the stress on nakedness in the un-sandaling of Francis' disciples, while the rock where he receives the stigmata is naked in its bareness, while nakedness is the key to Francis' death, recalling *Job* 1:21 with a new paternal, not maternal emphasis: 'Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither'. Nakedness relates to the bareness of the rock where Francis receives the stigmata: that *terzina* (106–108) lacks ornamentation and implies how, in contrast, allegory works as a veiling of sense, and since Francis is imprinted with the marks of crucifixion, the verses seem a literalisation of Poverty being on the cross with Christ; the allegory made literal, though the literal is miraculous. Identification with Christ on the cross equals the stigmata, in an history which goes from Poverty to Christ to Francis, a literal figure who is, however, inseparable from the allegorisations made of him.

Poverty, as nakedness, advertises the absence of figure, as decoration, as ornament: she draws attention to an absence within allegory; to coldness as much as to warmth. So, earlier, after giving the extended allegory of the knight and the lady (49–72), Thomas cuts the allegory by saying he will speak openly. This may seem to move to a naked way of speaking, but it does not, because of the presentation of the names. Francis is only named here, but the 'Francis' of the name is not so much the historical Francis, but the Francis of legend, now elevated, and paired with Poverty as obviously allegorical. Here it becomes clear that naming these identifications, Francis with Poverty and Poverty with Christ, and Francis with Christ, are not identifications; rather, they are ways of bringing out difference; these figures are not the same, but they attract each other; nakedness calls out to nakedness in ways which are erotic but disallow strict gender identifications. The eroticism which insists on nakedness as a marker of what Franciscanism testified to, a sensuousness noted even in the feeling of warmth and coldness, is not a way of insisting on the bareness of identity. When Francis receives the stigmata, it is apparent that it is from Christ within the seraph; this means that there is no single identity of Christ

39 See Smart, *The Dawn of Italian Painting* 161–162; and Gardner J., "A Minor Episode of Public Disorder in Assisi: St Francis Renounces his Inheritance", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 68 (2005) 275–285. See also Derbes, *Picturing the Passion* 227, for the mocking of Francis as a fool.

experienced, but rather significance inside significance. For nakedness is never quite complete or sufficient nakedness; it remains an image of the person, not the person, and it always conceals something, even in the metaphorical phrase 'porta del piacer', making nakedness never quite open, complete. The loin-cloth may be considered as like the Freudian fetish, a protection for the viewer against the starkness of nakedness, but not only is it then, contradictorily, an incitement to look, but it also becomes a reminder that even nakedness is not free of the fetish: it is, obviously, fetishised in presentation.⁴⁰ The writing of this canto shows that allegory declines either to close gaps or to bring about a coincidence of two entities which it has brought into close identification; rather, it always introduces the sphere of desire, because it enforces separation of people even in a situation of absolute intimacy. In this canto, where is Francis, and where is Christ? They are hidden within a veil that the text imposes, which covers nakedness, but then, nakedness never quite removes the veil; there is no moving outside allegory. In the deferrals that this draws attention to, Christ is never quite Christ because he is also Poverty, which is something else: one thing cannot adequately be the personification of another; this personifying practice denies to any any single identity. And further: Francis' allegiance to Poverty, outstripping Christ's in the fervour with which he courts her, just as she courted Christ, is not quite allegiance to Christ, but to Christ in a disguised form, which means that it affirms an alterity within Francis's form of Christianity; it becomes, then, impossible to distinguish between what is straying, or not straying, for the whole biography of Francis is a magnificent straying beyond the limits of single, precise meaning.

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40 For Freud on the fetish, see Freud S., "Fetishism" (1927), in idem, *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. J. Strachey 24 vols. (London: 2001) XXI, 149–157.

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Personification, Power, and the Body in Late Medieval and Early Modern English Poetry

William Rhodes

The personified agents of allegory, according to Angus Fletcher, can represent two possible types: ‘abstract ideas or [...] actual, historical persons’.¹ But what of the attempt to personify the material conditions and social forces in which ‘actual, historical persons’ exist, and within which ‘abstract ideas’ have expression? In late medieval England, as Katharine Breen has shown, writers of alliterative poetry developed a kind of ‘speculative personification allegory’ that uses *prosopopoeia* to create ‘intellectual tools’ that ‘are at once literary devices and instruments of thought that enable readers to define, manipulate, and evaluate new economic concepts’.² I want to explore how some examples of this type of personification capture the process by which economic forces and their relationship to political power structures affect individual bodies and the physical survival of the population—the two domains of biopolitics.³ I will further argue that this capacity of personification explains the profound importance of William Langland’s fourteenth-century poem known as *Piers Plowman* to the social criticism of the English Reformation, in particular that of Robert Crowley, who edited *Piers Plowman* in 1550 [Fig. 3.1].⁴ The influence of the personification of Hunger in Passus 6 of *Piers Plowman* on Crowley’s *Philargyrie of greate Britayne* (1551) epitomizes this relationship. Langland’s Hunger and Crowley’s *Philargyrie* consolidate the social and material relations of production as these interact with institutional power structures like the manor and the Church in terms of their effects on individual bodies and the

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- 1 Fletcher A., *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* (Ithaca: 1964) 26. For a more extensive taxonomy of personification, see Paxson J.J., *The Poetics of Personification*, Literature, Culture, Theory 6 (Cambridge: 1994) 35–62.
 - 2 Breen K., “The Need for Allegory: *Wynnere and Wastoure* as an *Ars Poetica*”, *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 26 (2012) 187–229, here 187.
 - 3 Foucault describes these as the ‘anatomo-politics of the human body’ and the ‘bio-politics of the population’ in *History of Sexuality*, vol. 1: *An Introduction*, trans. R. Hurley (New York: 1990) 139.
 - 4 On this relationship, see King J.N., *English Reformation Literature* (Princeton: 1982); and Kelen S.A., *Langland’s Early Modern Identities* (New York: 2007).



FIGURE 3.1 Title page of [William Langland,] *The Vision of Pierce Plowman* [...] (London, Richard Grafton: 1550). Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library, STC 19906. COURTESY OF THE FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY.

physical conditions for the survival of the population. These personifications attempt to capture the ‘slow violence’ of history as state, religious, and local institutions enact their power through complex biopolitical processes of ideological, economic, and ecological transformation.⁵ In short, these works show how personification can embody that which acts on people’s bodies.

In his lectures at the Collège de France in 1975–1976, Michel Foucault articulated some fundamental aspects of biopolitics, defined as ‘power’s hold over life’, or ‘the acquisition of power over man insofar as man is a living being’.⁶ According to Giorgio Agamben, ‘the production of a biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power’,⁷ and although Foucault historicizes biopolitics as emerging no earlier than the seventeenth century, its tendencies are

5 Nixon R., *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge: 2011).

6 Foucault M., *Society Must be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France 1975–1976*, trans. D. Macey (New York: 2003) 239.

7 Agamben G., *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. D. Heller-Roazen (Stanford: 1998) 6.

evident in earlier forms of disciplinary management and care for environmental and bodily health. Medieval and early modern practices of labor regulation, estate management, and agrarian husbandry show, for example, the intersection of life and politics in the creation of the docile bodies necessary for sustaining the economic and political hierarchy of the church and aristocracy. As Anthony Musson observes, “The first national labor laws in England were not a by-product of industrialisation, but a governmental response to the economic and demographic disaster brought about by the first wave of plagues that hit England in 1348”.⁸ These labor laws responded to the impact of widespread mortality on labor relations by attempting, in Kellie Robertson’s words, “to regulate the larger social body—the common profit of the realm—through the laborer’s individual body”.⁹ Health, corporeality (individual and social), and disciplinary care were active areas of political and economic concern that required the exercise of power over bodies both as symbolic bearers of personhood and as a bare substrate of physical existence that might be excluded from the community of social persons.¹⁰

It was not only in the regulation of the individual laboring body that politics and physical life intersected, but also in the juncture of ‘human beings insofar as they are a species, insofar as they are living beings, and their environment, the milieu in which they live’.¹¹ The biopolitical operation of ensuring the health of a population ‘as a productive force’ by studying its relationship to the environment is evident, for example, in the fifteenth-century Middle English translation of Palladius’s *De re rustica*.¹²

Good aier is there as dalis depe are noone,
And mystis derk no dayis makith nyght;
The contrey men colourid wel vchoone,
Their wittis cleer and vnoffensid sight,

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- 8 Musson A., “Reconstructing English Labor Laws: A Medieval Perspective”, in Robertson K. – Uebel M. (eds.), *The Middle Ages At Work: Practicing Labor In Late Medieval England* (New York: 2004) 113–132, here 113.
 - 9 Robertson K., “Branding and the Technologies of Labor Regulation”, in Robertson K. – Uebel M. (eds.), *The Middle Ages At Work: Practicing Labor In Late Medieval England* (New York: 2004) 133–153, here 135.
 - 10 On social personhood, see Fowler E., *Literary Character: The Human Figure in Early English Writing* (Ithaca: 2003) 16–31.
 - 11 Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended* 245.
 - 12 Medovoi L., “The Biopolitical Unconscious: Toward an Eco-Marxist Literary Theory”, *Mediations* 24,2 (2010) 122–139, here 128.

Her voices feir, her herynge pure and light—
 Al this is preef of holsum aier and clene,
 And ther as is contrair is aier vnclene.
 [...]

 The longis woo comth ofte of yvel eire;
 The stomak als, of aier is ouertake.
 Take heede ek if the dwellers in that leir
 Her wombis, sidis, reynys swelle or ake,
 If langour in their bladdris ought awake.
 And yf thou se the puple sounde and fair,
 No doute is in thi watir ner thyn aier. (1.29–56)¹³

These lines appears in a section concerned with determining the fitness of an area for cultivation, which involves not just features of the physical milieu like air and water, but how these ecologically relate to the physical health of the laboring population, which must be determined by examining and interpreting bodies in terms of their appearance and capacities. As the beginning of the manual advises, it is necessary to know ‘how things are in nature / In places where you would have cultivation’ (‘how thing is of nature / In placis ther thou wolt ha the culture’; 1.20–21). The practice and discourse of agrarian husbandry required the study and management of physical life as a fundamental operation of power, especially at the level of the manorial estate, held by secular lords or monastic foundations, where political power, religious authority, and agrarian economy overlapped in the production of food.¹⁴

13 *The Middle English Translation of Palladius De re rustica*, ed. M. Liddell (Berlin: 1896). ‘Good air is where there are no deep dales, / And no dark mists that make day night; / The country dwellers are each well-colored, / Their wits clear and their sight unoffensive, / Their voices fair, their hearing pure and light—/ All of this is proof of wholesome and clean air, / And wherever is the contrary is the air unclean. / [...] The lung-woe comes often from evil air; / The stomach also of air is overtaken. / Take heed also if the dwellers in that area / Their wombs, sides, or kidneys swell or ache, / Or if sickness awakens in any of their bladders, / And if you see the people sound and fair, / No doubt is in your water or your air’.

14 On the ideology of the three estates and the role of the agrarian laborer within it, see: Hilton R., *Bond Men Made Free: Medieval Peasant Movements and the English Rising of 1381* (London: 1973); and Freedman P., *Images of the Medieval Peasant* (Stanford: 1999). On the structure, management, and economy of manorial estates, see Dyer C., *Lords and Peasants in a Changing Society: The Estates of the Bishopric of Worcester, 680–1540* (Cambridge: 1980); and Bailey M., *The English Manor* (Manchester: 2002).

It is at this point of power's intersection with the physical processes by which humans survive that the personifications examined in this chapter operate. Both *Piers Plowman* and *Philargyrie of greate Britayne* seek to capture the ways in which the institutional forms and ideology of church, state, and society function within the agrarian economy and ecosystem such that they exercise material force over the laboring bodies of the population. These personifications make the body a site of political control and resistance and reflect upon the nature of embodiment itself by making visible the material forces and conditions that compose and contextualize human existence.

Piers Plowman: Hunger and Discipline

Piers Plowman was composed during the late fourteenth century. It comes to us in three distinct versions, called the A-, B-, and C-versions, evincing an ongoing process of revision from the late 1360s to the end of the 1380s, apparently the life's work of its mysterious author, William Langland.¹⁵ The evidence for the life of Langland is sparse, much of it coming from within *Piers Plowman* itself.¹⁶ The poem is written in unrhymed alliterative verse, characterized by four stressed syllables distributed on either side of a medial caesura, the first three stressed syllables usually corresponding to an alliterative pattern (*aa / ax*).¹⁷ *Piers Plowman* is part of a large and diverse corpus of Middle English poetry defined by this alliterative metre.¹⁸ Its 'episodic form', divided into

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- 15 Kane G., "The Text", in Alford J.A. (ed.), *A Companion to 'Piers Plowman'* (Berkeley: 1988) 175–200. The most recent overview is Hanna R., "The Versions and Revisions of *Piers Plowman*", in Cole A. – Galloway A. (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to 'Piers Plowman'* (Cambridge: 2014) 33–49. All quotations in this chapter will be from Langland W., *The Vision of Piers Plowman: A Critical Edition of the B-Text*, ed. A.V.C. Schmidt (London: 1995).
 - 16 For brief accounts of this evidence, see Hanna R., *William Langland* (Aldershot: 1993) 1–10. Recent work by Robert Adams develops a definite context for Langland's biography in *Langland and the Rokele Family* (Dublin: 2013). For seminal analyses of the apparent autobiography within the poem, see Justice S. – Kerby-Fulton K. (eds.), *Written Work: Langland, Labor, and Authorship* (Philadelphia: 1997).
 - 17 Lawton D., "Alliterative Style", in Alford J.A. (ed.), *A Companion to 'Piers Plowman'* (Berkeley 1988) 223–249.
 - 18 For a useful summary of the vast critical debates around the alliterative tradition, see Ian Cornelius's recent review essay, "Alliterative Revival: Retrospect and Prospect", *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 26 (2012) 261–276. For an important overview of the alliterative corpus, see Hanna R., "Alliterative Poetry", in Wallace D. (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature* (Cambridge: 1999) 488–512. Starting points for the study of alliterative

sections called *passus* or 'steps', is driven by a series of encounters between the dreamer, Will, and a number of personified agents who attempt to answer Will's questions, but whose responses never finally overcome the deep religious, social, and political problems Will raises.¹⁹

Piers Plowman's restless, exploratory energy stems from the conflict that emerges between the constraints of material existence and the desire for transcendent truth. The eponymous figure of the poem, Piers, seems like a potential agent for reconciling these two antagonistic realities, as he represents at various times the ideal peasant worker, Christ's human nature, and the embodiment of evangelical preaching.²⁰ But even this promising figure cannot help Will resolve the clash between religious wisdom, received social ideology, and the messy reality of embodied existence. Nowhere is this tension, and Piers's failure to defuse it, more evident than in the traumatic scene of social discord that brings about the appearance of Hunger in Passus 6. Attending to Hunger's consolidation of bodily suffering, economic and social systems, and intellectual abstraction illuminates the appeal of Langlandian personification allegory to reformist writers seeking to vivify the operations of power at the point where they affect individual bodies most directly.

The personification of Hunger combines the social conditions that lead to starvation, the ideological justification of its necessity, and its painful bodily effects into a single figure. Hunger functions here as a disciplinary mechanism by which the political control over laborers' bodies could be achieved—a major concern in the wake of post-Black Death labor shortages and the reactive legislation intended to shore up the privileges of landlords and employers.²¹ Hunger thus exemplifies how the prosopopoeic treatment of

poetry are Lawton D. (ed.), *Middle English Alliterative Poetry and its Literary Background* (Cambridge: 1982); and Pearsall D., *Old English and Middle English Poetry* (London: 1977).

- 19 Middleton A., "Narration and the Invention of Experience: Episodic Form in *Piers Plowman*", in Benson L.D. – Wenzel S. (eds.), *The Wisdom of Poetry: Essays in Early English Literature in Honor of Morton W. Bloomfield* (Kalamazoo: 1982) 91–122.
- 20 On preaching, see Barney S., "The Plowshare of the Tongue: The Progress of a Symbol from the Bible to *Piers Plowman*", *Medieval Studies* 35 (1973) 261–293. For Piers as Langland's 'hypothetical' solution to the poem's deep questions, see Watson N., "*Piers Plowman*, Pastoral Theology, and Spiritual Perfectionism: Hawkyn's Cloak and Patience's *Pater Noster*", *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 21 (2007) 83–118, 94. Helen Barr offers a strong overview of his protean significance in "Major Episodes and Moments in *Piers Plowman* B", in Cole A. – Galloway A. (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to 'Piers Plowman'* (Cambridge: 2014) 15–32.
- 21 See Robertson K., *The Laborer's Two Bodies: Literary and Legal Productions In Britain, 1350–1500* (New York: 2005); Robertson, "Branding"; and Given-Wilson C., "Service, Serfdom

politics can account for 'the concrete ways in which power penetrates subjects' very bodies and forms of life'.²²

Will has already encountered a number of personified abstractions by the time we meet Hunger, such as Kind Wit, Holy Church, Meed, Conscience, Reason, and the Seven Deadly Sins. Amongst the most important questions he has asked of these figures is his request to Holy Church to 'tell me this—/ How can I save my soul?' ('tel me this ilke—/ How I may save my soule'; B.1.83–84)). This concern with salvation, which Holy Church says is achievable through Truth, provides the context for the dreamed scene of communal labor in Passus 6, as the search for Truth in *Piers Plowman* begins with the material situation from which mortal, embodied humans strive for this transcendent ideal. As Will suggests in his response to Holy Church's confident assertion that 'When all treasures are tested, Truth is the best' ('Whan alle tresors arn tried, Truthe is the beste' B.1.135), the body is a necessary organ of understanding: "Yet I have no instinctive knowledge". I said, "you must teach me better / By what craft in my body it (Truth) comes and where" ('Yet have I no kynde knowynge', quod I, 'yet mote ye kenne me better / By what craft in my cors it comseth, and where'; B.1.138–139). Will's quest for Truth in *Piers Plowman* must be activated within the constraints of embodied existence, which requires the creation of personified figures that do more than speak timeless truths, but instead vivify the material conditions within which such truths must be grasped. This type of personification blurs the dualism between spirit and matter, offering a glimpse of the 'embodied mind,' as the intellectual work within the poem is always entangled with bodily capacities and experiences. In this regard, *Piers Plowman* exemplifies the tendency of medieval personification allegory to use narratives of the conflict between body and soul as an occasion to demonstrate their mutually shaping interaction, undermining the dualism that supports the allegory's premise. As Masha Raskolnikov has shown, personifications of body and soul claim 'a retrospective vision of a whole being', when the interdependence of soul and flesh, not their strict opposition, results from the narrative of their clash.²³

and English Labour Legislation, 1350–1500", in Curry A. – Matthew E. (eds.), *Concepts and Patterns of Service in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: 2000) 21–38; and Aers D., "Justice and Wage-Labor after the Black Death: Some Perplexities for William Langland", in Frantzen A.J. – Moffat D. (eds.), *The Work of Work* (Glasgow: 1994) 169–191.

22 Agamben, *Homo Sacer* 5.

23 On the 'embodied mind', see Lakoff G. – Johnson M., *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: 1999); and Raskolnikov M., *Body Against Soul: Gender and Sowlehele in Middle English Allegory* (Columbus: 2009) 4.

The scene of communal labor that leads to the appearance of Hunger in Passus 6 is just such an example of the intertwining of mind and matter, since it depicts an experience of embodied labor that occurs because of a sermon the personification of Reason preaches in Will's second dream. Reason addresses the 'field of folk' Will had seen in his first vision, representing all of society in its varied estates and occupations. This sermon is so effective that it not only inspires the repentance of personifications of the Seven Deadly Sins, but also 'A thousand of men' to seek out St. Truth (B.5.510). These aspiring pilgrims, however, realize that they do not know how to find this Saint. At this point Piers Plowman makes his first appearance in the poem, introducing himself as a guide to Truth, whose expertise is based on years of service under Truth as an agrarian laborer (B.5.537–555). Before Piers can guide the would-be pilgrims to Truth, he must finish his day's work of plowing a half acre of land. He enlists his newfound followers to help him with this work. In the process, he establishes a microcosmic laboring community, in which women sew and spin (B.6.9–20), and the nobility, represented by a knight, keep the peace and protect the fields and the church (B.6.24–32). So begins this allegory of an ideal social order, in which the division of the population into various social categories, each with its specialized labor, allows for the eventual collective journey to Truth.

The vulnerable bodies that compose society require clothes for warmth that women must weave (B.6.15–16). The production of food requires aristocratic violence to protect workers and their fields 'From wasters and from wicked men that this world destroy' ('Fro wastours and fro wikked men that this world destruyeth'), as well as from boar, deer, and birds that eat the produce of the fields (B.6.28–32). This version of the ideal laboring society underscores its primary purpose as fulfilling those bodily needs Holy Church describes in Passus 1 as the conditions of humanity's creation by Truth: 'clothes from chill to save you, / And food at mealtime for easing of yourself' ('vesture from chele thee to save, / And mete at meel for mysese of thiselve'; B.1.23–24). But the formation of a community in order to meet these needs requires the exclusion of and violence toward those humans deemed 'wastours', animalized as quarry for aristocratic displays of power. Piers describes this aristocratic violence as a kind of care for the population, a protection of the corporate social order against the effects of waste, bringing the warming cloth and the knightly sword into an oddly homologous position as protectors of bare life. This conjunction of collective care and exclusive violence on the border separating human from animal and productive worker from unproductive waster captures the mutually constitutive movements of community and immunity, to use Roberto Esposito's terms, where the former opens up towards the life of another as a

necessary condition of survival, while the latter reasserts the boundaries of bodily identity against the invasive potential of the other upon whom each member of the community depends.²⁴

Holy Church describes a third necessity, in addition to food and clothes, that foreshadows the disruptive role it will play in the laboring community of Passus 6: 'drink when you are thirsty—but not out of reason, / Such that you will be worth less when you should work' ('drynke whan thow driest—ac do noght out of reson, / That thow worthe the wers whan thow werche sholdest'; B.1.25–26). The maintenance of bodily survival entails dependence upon substances like beer that, while necessary in a time before water purification,²⁵ may also disrupt the social relations of production that meet basic needs. In Passus 6, the enabling interdependence of humans upon each other and the earth through which bodily needs are met creates the conditions in which this interdependence can turn towards crisis and compulsion. For it is 'drynke whan thow driest' making some members of the community 'wers' when they 'werche sholdest' that causes Hunger to appear.

Piers's laboring society quickly begins to fall apart when he notices that some disregard his authority as an employer and manorial overseer, drinking and singing while the communal work goes on around them. Piers's swift and angry response moves right to the crux of this episode, threatening the idlers that if they do not start working, 'No grain that grows here will help you (when) you are at need' ('Shal no greyn that here groweth glade yow at nede'; B.6.119). Food, the reason for the formation of the community and the physical means by which its life continues, becomes an instrument of biopolitical control. The inefficacy of the sovereign violence of the knight ('taking life and letting live') against waste (B.6.164–70) means that Piers, in the act of growing food for the community, must exercise the biopolitical 'power to "make" live and "let" die'.²⁶

The maintenance of an ideal working community depends upon bodily discipline, but the enforcement of this discipline is limited by the epistemological dilemma that arises when would-be workers offer their bodies as potentially deceptive signs for their inability to work, involving power in an interpretive

24 Esposito R., *Terms of the Political: Community, Immunity, Biopolitics*, trans. R.N. Welch (New York: 2013).

25 Bennett J.M., *Ale, Beer and Brewsters in England: Women's Work in a Changing World, 1300–1600* (Oxford: 1996) 16–17.

26 Foucault, *Society Must be Defended* 241.

operation that must decide which bodies can join the community and become worthy of charity:²⁷

Tho were faitours afered, and feyned hem blynde;
 Somme leide hir legges aliry, as swiche losels konneth,
 And made hir pleynt to Piers and preide hym of grace:
 'For we have no lymes to laboure with, lord, ygraced be ye!' (B.6.121–124)²⁸

Within a poem that functions by virtue of the signifying powers of embodied forms, these 'faitours' who use their bodies to possibly deceive Piers do more than just disrupt the peace of Piers's community of workers. They raise the possibility that this peace depends upon a legible body that might not be so easy to read—the body of the worker, or that of the legitimate beggar.²⁹ In the words of Kathleen Hewett-Smith, 'the subject of poverty involves the poem in an intense confrontation with its own modes of referentiality'.³⁰ This episode shows how the supposedly wasted and wasteful non-laboring body must be read and either deemed a legitimate member of the community or rejected from it as a 'wastour', the poem's figure of consumptive, anti-social, bare physical existence defined against the ideal laboring body.

Piers responds to those who take on the mask of legitimate recipients of charity with a speech that differentiates between 'wastours' (B.6.130) on the one hand, and the disabled, the shackled (B.6.136), and hermits and anchorites (B.6.145) on the other. Each of these types of the legitimate recipient of charity reveals how the individual body must fit the conceptual categories through which the population is managed. The group of 'wastours' that Piers first noticed idling becomes Waster (*Wastour*), a personified amalgamation of material consumption and ideological panic who angrily rejects the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate idleness in his refusal of work. This refusal provokes Piers to invoke Hunger, the personification of the disciplinary mechanism by which Piers's interpretation and categorization of bodies as either productive or wasteful translates into physical power over those bodies.

27 On the epistemology and hermeneutics of poverty in *Piers Plowman*, see Crassons K., *The Claims of Poverty: Literature, Culture, and Ideology in Late Medieval England* (Notre Dame: 2010) 21–88.

28 'Then were the fakers afraid, and pretended to be blind; / Somme laid their legs awry, as such wastrels know how to do, / And complained to Piers and begged him for mercy: / "For we have no limbs to labor with, lord, thanked be you!"'

29 As Robertson observes of the ways in which bodies had to be categorized as a result of labor regulations; Robertson, "Branding" 135.

30 Hewett-Smith K., "Allegory on the Half Acre: The Demands of History", *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 10 (1996) 1–22, here 1.

Piers's social arrangement has room in it for certain kinds of avoidance of manual labor, which he is extremely anxious to limit only to those who deserve this leisure.³¹ Waster represents the potential to exceed the bounds Piers would otherwise set on the freedom from bodily toil, and his prosopopoeic nomination sets him up as the principle against which Piers's community is defined in its exclusion of the healthy-but-idle body. As such, he must suffer from the denial of the food that ensures the survival of the community:

'Now, by the peril of my soule!' quod Piers, 'I shal apeire yow alle'—
And houped after Hunger, that herde hym at the firste.
'Awreke me of thise wastours' quod he, 'that this world shendeth!'
(B.6.171–173)³²

Hunger's arrival and attack compress traditional estates ideology, the political categorization this ideology underwrites, and their combined function within the material infrastructure of the agrarian economy into an individualized, prosopopoeic confrontation. This compression of individual actors, material relations, and social beliefs and judgments shows how the vast array of forces that underlie the production of food hinges upon the operation of power to decide the status of physical life and act upon it accordingly.

In the vivid descriptions of the pain Hunger inflicts on Waster and his Breton associate (*Bretoner*), the movement from social totality to individual body makes clear the latent violence of this interdependent and stratified community:

Hunger in haste thoo hente Wastour by the mawe
And wrong hym so by the wombe that al watrede his eighen.
He buffetted the Bretoner aboute the chekes
That he loked lik a lanterne al his lif after.
He bette hem so bothe, he brast ner hire guttes
Ne hadde Piers with a pese loof preyed hym bileve,
They hadde be dolven bothe—ne deme thow noon oother. (B.6.174–180)³³

31 Eleanor Johnson describes the 'note of desperation here . . . when all human jurisdictions fail to curb waste'; Johnson E., "The Poetics of Waste: Medieval English Ecocriticism", *PMLA* 127, 3 (2012) 460–476, esp. 470.

32 "'Now, by the peril of my soul!" said Piers, "I shall hurt you all"—/ And whooped after Hunger, that heard him right away. / "Avenge me of these wasters," said he (Piers), "that harm this world!"'.

33 'Hunger in haste then grabbed Waster by the gut / And wrung him so by the womb that his eyes watered. / He beat the Bretoner about the face / That he looked like a lantern all

In this passage, the suffering and disfigured bodies of the two wasters take on a level of detail and specificity that serves to make the concepts of hunger and waste immediately physical. Hunger exposes the bare life of the (non)laboring body, the physical substrate that suffers the effects of power's classificatory decision about whether or not it can join the political life of the community. Hunger evokes both an intensely corporal experience and links that experience to its source and function within the political and economic structure of the manorial estate or peasant freehold.

Hunger's meaning is fungible for the different characters of this episode: for Waster, it is an acute sense of bodily pain, but for Piers (and for the knight), it is a form of discipline and a necessary part of the social order that both results from Waster's agitation, and brings it to an end. Hunger grips Waster's cramping gut and beats the Breton's hollow cheeks until Piers decides they have suffered enough. The personification of Hunger creates a visible agent for a complex social process, and reveals how the personification of material forces can make bodies politically legible, as the disciplinary violence inscribed on Waster and the Breton inspires idlers of all sorts, including 'A heap of hermits' ('An heep of heremytes') to go to work 'to drive away Hunger' ('to dryve away Hunger'; B.6.187, 185). Piers articulates this intersection of power and physical life when he, as a manorial overseer, asks Hunger 'How can I master them and make them work?' ('how I myghte amaistren hem and make hem to werche'; B.6.211). Piers makes explicit Hunger's role as a representative of the biopolitical control of physical existence. Crucially, Piers is not a sovereign who can simply use the power of the sword to compel obedience (the knight is no help), but presides over a voluntary assemblage of workers for wages,³⁴ whose freedom must nevertheless be constrained. The achievement of this constraint depends upon the extension of Piers's otherwise limited power over the bodies of his employees in the form of Hunger's violence.

While Hunger may seem to be an agent that Piers can control and deploy as a disciplinary tool over the bodies of his rebellious workers, the labor dispute proves to be a cause of general hunger, an aspect of embodied existence that can never finally be driven away, as the Passus concludes with a vision of Hunger returning because of a flood (B.6.319–320). In its composition by a variety of social relations and natural forces, and in its varied significance to the characters it confronts, Hunger embodies the point of intersection between

his life afterwards. / He beat them both so that he nearly burst their guts / And if Piers had not asked him to leave off with a loaf of bean bread / They both would have been killed—don't think otherwise.

34 Simpson J., "Spirituality and Economics in the B-Text", *Yearbook of Langland Studies* 1 (1987) 83–105, esp. 100.

economic and political power, physical life, and the ecological conditions against which humans must struggle to survive. It also reflects upon the nature of embodiment itself, which, as *Piers Plowman* shows, is both physical and performative: having a body means that it will be variously read and interpreted in the constitution of the community. The figure of Hunger makes visible the material exercise of power that underlies the imaginary symmetrical reciprocity of the conventional model of the three estates, exposing the ways in which a legible bodily disposition enables biopolitical disciplinary regimes.

Philargyrie of greate Britayne: The Reformation and Biopolitics

In combining the intellectual justifications of Hunger as a disciplinary force in society with its physical effects on individual bodies, Langland offers to a reformist writer like Robert Crowley the means to personify the complicated relationship between religious discourse and the precarious material situation of the English commons during the middle decades of the sixteenth century. Personification's capacity to represent not only general abstractions and historical persons, but also the conditions in which those persons live and such abstractions take on material force characterizes the Reformation's own conjunction of intellectual debate and physical conflict. In the Reformation, 'God wages revolution through writing', according to Bryan Cummings, but for a number of mid-Tudor writers, a revolution in words was insufficient if it did not materially alter communal welfare.³⁵ Crowley extends late-medieval 'speculative personification allegory' to this new biopolitical situation. His polemical interest in not only diagnosing, but curing, the ailing commonwealth involves a solution that is at once nostalgic and apocalyptic in its celebration of sovereign violence as opposed to biopolitical control. This imaginary confrontation between sovereignty and biopolitics results from the method of personifying systemic operations of power Crowley learned from *Piers Plowman*.

Crowley edited *Piers Plowman*, based on a now-lost manuscript of the B-version, during a period of civil unrest in 1550. He was a part of a strident group of vernacular poets, preachers, and polemicists most active during the brief reign of the young King Edward VI, a time when religious writing that had been suppressed under the reign of Henry VIII was actively encouraged by the most powerful figures around Edward.³⁶ These writers' take on religious questions was inseparable from an outraged economic and political

35 Cummings B., *The Literary Culture of the Reformation: Grammar and Grace* (Oxford: 2002) 16.

36 King, *English Reformation Literature* 5, 26–32.

orientation towards the poor that earned them the epithet of 'commonwealth men'.³⁷ Understanding the place of a poem like *Piers Plowman* within this tradition of reformist writing has often centered upon its prophetic social criticism and its satire of clerics, friars, monks, and prelates.³⁸ But Crowley's *Philargyrie of greate Britayne* (1551) [Fig. 3.2] suggests that it was the capacities of Langlandian personification allegory to make visible complex socio-economic systems that explains a great deal of its importance to the radical reformers. Crowley released his edition of Langland's poem after a period of plague, inflation, international conflict, and domestic rebellion in the late 1540s because Langland's capacious social vision could perhaps speak to the events of the mid-sixteenth century and show a way to make them legible.³⁹ Crowley's own poetry took after this model of ambitiously reformist poetry, as is apparent in *Philargyrie of greate Britayne*, his diagnosis of the progress and failures of the English Reformation.⁴⁰ *Philargyrie* was printed in the same black letter type that was used for Crowley's edition of *Piers Plowman*, and while the form of the poetry is in rhymed ballad-measure stanzas, it is nevertheless marked by the heavy alliterative patterning that characterizes Langland's verse.⁴¹ In this form, *Philargyrie* adapts Langlandian personification allegory to capture the interaction of religion, mercantile economy, and agrarian social ecology as these affect the population as a whole, and not just the individual body. Crowley compresses these processes in the figure of Philargyrie ('lover of silver'), a voracious giant who combines the abstract vice of greed with specific forms of ecological and economic exploitation.

Philargyrie of greate Britayne begins with a verse prologue to the reader in which Crowley confesses 'I have feyned and written a lye', but it is a truer lie

37 R.H. Tawney applied the term in *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (Gloucester: 1962) 144–145. See also McRae A., *God Speed the Plough: The Representation of Agrarian England, 1500–1660* (Cambridge: 1996) 28–32. For subsequent debates about the term, see Jones M.R., *Radical Pastoral: 1381–1594* (Farnham: 2011) 14–15.

38 The seminal work on this use of *Piers Plowman* is White H.C., *Social Criticism in Popular Religious Literature of the Sixteenth Century* (New York: 1944). See also King J.N., "Robert Crowley's Edition of *Piers Plowman*: A Tudor Apocalypse", *Modern Philology* 73,4 (1976) 342–352; Hudson A., "Epilogue: The Legacy of *Piers Plowman*", in Alford J.A. (ed.), *A Companion to 'Piers Plowman'* (Berkeley 1988) 251–266, esp. 258; Jones, *Radical Pastoral* 14; and McRae, *God Spede the Plough*.

39 Johnston M., "From Edward III to Edward VI: *The Vision of Piers Plowman* and Early Modern England", *Reformations* 11 (2006) 47–78, esp. 49–50, 74–76.

40 King, *English Reformation Literature* 339–342.

41 King J.N., "Philargyrie of greate Britayne by Robert Crowley", *English Literary Renaissance* 10, 1 (1980) 47–75, esp. 50, 52.

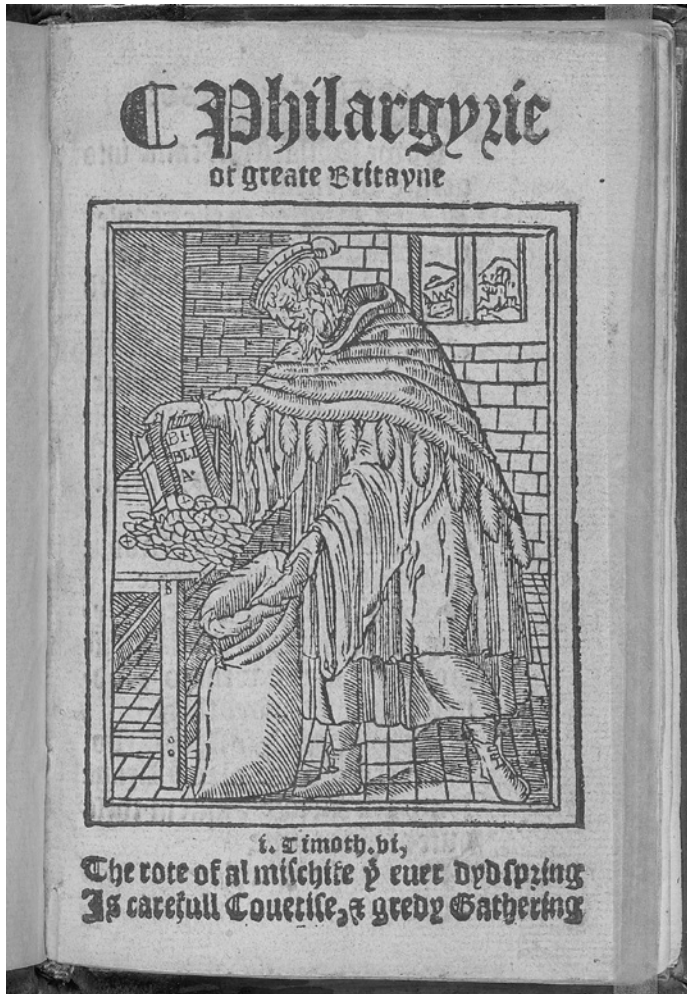


FIGURE 3.2 Title page of Robert Crowley, *Philargyrie of greate Britayne* (London, Richard Grafton: 1551). New Haven, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, STC 6089.5.

COURTESY OF THE BEINECKE RARE BOOK AND
MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY.

than he would wish, 'For treuly thys Gigant greate Philargyrie / Is present in greate Brytayne even euery where' (ll. 8–11).⁴² The prologue emphasizes the extent to which this ubiquity appears in the physical landscape, as 'All placis

42 All quotations are from Crowley R., *Philargyrie of greate Britayne*, ed. J.N. King, *English Literary Renaissance* 10,1 (1980) 47–75.

of Pleasure' and the good and profitable lands are expropriated by Hypocrisy and Philaute (Self-Love), the two figures who serve as Philargyrie's principal advisors and agents, representing the Catholic and the Protestant churches respectively (ll. 16–17). Crowley wishes to describe how the excessive concentration of wealth in the hands of a greedy elite was left unchanged by the Reformation: Hypocrisy and Philaute serve Philargyrie despite the fact that the former preaches purgatory (ll. 401–406) while the latter preaches the efficacy of prayer without priestly mediation (ll. 1217–1228). Philargyrie personifies concrete methods for the appropriation, control, and consumption of the physical environment and the labor of the population as these are converted into the gold that must constantly flow into his maw. In this resolutely materialist diagnosis of post-Reformation society, Crowley has little concern for differences in doctrine, since he sees nothing but the sameness of an ideological obfuscation of land grabbing.

In Philargyrie's first oration to his followers, the landscape of England and those that labor upon it are all subsumed within his scheme to satisfy his massive appetites. Philargyrie has the peculiar physical form of an immortal god that only eats 'golde moste pure / That wyll endure' as opposed to 'bryckle breade' (ll. 227–232). This key aspect of Philargyrie's prosopopoeic figuration allows Crowley to gesture toward the mysterious process by which human labor and the productive energies of the earth get transformed into the leveling medium of gold currency. His unique immortal physiology calls attention to the very foods his rapacity ultimately prevents the people of the realm from enjoying as he prescribes their theft and conversion into gold. Crowley renders the shift from subsistence farming to mercantile production and wage labor as a matter of competing appetites, as the personified 'body' of institutional power and agrarian capitalism is fed to the detriment of the actual bodies of the population.

Philargyrie commands the hoarding of both goods and lands so that they can then be sold or rented at exorbitant prices. Through force or guile, Philargyrie's agents will bring to the giant what 'other men have sowne' (l. 118): 'make the vile slaues / And paysant knaues / Paye you at your owne wyll' (ll. 134–136). Having peasant workers at 'your owne wyll', as the plowing of the half acre in *Piers Plowman* shows, is best achieved with 'the rod / Of hunger', which Philargyrie takes in hand as the ultimate assurance of obedience (ll. 246–247).⁴³ The image of the 'rod of hunger' in Philargyrie's fist transforms a process of 'economic' power (i.e. the use of control over resources and means

43 Jones notes the influence of Langland's Hunger on Crowley's giant; Jones, *Radical Pastoral* 43.

of production to compel labor) into an emblem of 'extra-economic' coercion in the form of sovereign violence.⁴⁴ This disciplinary hunger threatens physical pain and death, but the process by which it comes to afflict certain bodies involves the dispossession of rural producers and the resultant pressure to labor in exchange for the means of subsistence either in cities or on the enclosed land of the political elite. Even as Philargyrie's oration describes such economic processes, the giant still allows Crowley to simplify and vivify the effects of such diffuse processes on the common body.

Philargyrie's oration rhetorically mimics his function as a translator of raw materials and commodities into gold, thereby embodying and enacting the link between land, human labor, and the wealth of the church (pre- or post-Reformation):

The woule, the lead
 The corne for breadde
 The bere butter and cheese
 Wyll be well solde
 Wherefore be bolde
 By them you can nought leese.
 Metalle of Bellis
 Lether and fellis
 And woulsted yarne also
 Are redye golde
 Let them be solde
 Wyth thyngis a thousand moe
 And if you maye
 Convey awaye
 These thyngis beyond y^e fome
 Then shall the pryse
 Of that aryse
 That shal be lefte at home (ll. 155–172)

This catalogue of material goods evokes the plentitude that enters the economic black hole that is Philargyrie's gut. For Crowley, the outrage of selling these goods is captured in the phrase 'beyond y^e fome', as these material supports for human life that could be used as food, clothing, and shelter seem to disappear to nowhere in particular, only to cause prices to rise 'at home'.

44 On 'extra-economic' and 'economic' power in sixteenth-century England, see Wood E.M., *The Origin of Capitalism: A Longer View* (London: 2002) 99.

Crowley truncates his vision of economic activity by equating the conversion of labor and raw materials into commodities for export with their waste, as any gold that would come back in exchange is lost to the workers that produced them.

In order to ensure that the supply of commodities for sale is secure, Philargyrie emphasizes the importance of obtaining land and infrastructure, where ‘fyrst encrease doeth stande’ (l. 178):

The pasture grownde
That feadeth sound
You must in no case lacke
All maner mynes
And myllis that gryndis
Must helpe to fyll your sacke
Copsis of wodde
Be verye good
For you to have in hande
You must nedes haue
Greate fermes a thraue
Wyth all good fruitfull lands. (ll. 179–190)

This catalogue of land, raw materials, and infrastructure, including pasture, mines, mills, woods, and farms, captures an intricate political ecology and economic network. Philargyrie’s appetitive imagination fuels an oration of systemic scope as Crowley uses the image of the giant to identify the complex interrelations of institutional power and early capitalist accumulation and production as these relate to the population and its physical milieu. It may be the case that ‘the literature of the [mid-Tudor] period is unable, by and large, adequately to name the sources that shaped it,’⁴⁵ but personification did offer to writers like Crowley in this period a means of naming (and embodying) the interaction of ecology, economy, politics, and discourse in the creation of social reality.

When Hypocrisy speaks, his oration offers another means of disciplinary control: religious rhetoric to stoke fears of post-mortem suffering. In Crowley’s corrosively suspicious hermeneutic, Hypocrisy’s (and eventually Philaute’s) relationship with Philargyrie enacts the links between the mystification of reli-

45 Warley C., “Reforming the Reformers: Robert Crowley and Nicholas Udall”, in Pincombe M. – Shrank C. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Literature 1485–1603* (Oxford: 2009) 273–290, here 274.

gious ideology and its material effects. For a price, 'Pardone of all theyr Ill' can be obtained by the people:

So they wyll brynge
 To us althyng
 Whereof we shall stande nede
 Houses to buylde
 Boeth thackt and tylde
 And bye us fode and wede (ll. 382–388)

Food, clothes, and shelter, which *Piers Plowman* treats as the basic protections for the vulnerability of embodied existence, are only the beginning for Hypocrisy, who goes on to describe the lands, rents, towns, and cities they can obtain through the trick of extending Philargyrie's threat of hunger in this life into one of greater suffering in the next. Care for souls becomes a means of extending power over bodies.

Once obtained by guileful preaching, these lands must be held physically so as to allow the surveillance of the population (ll. 527–544). Hypocrisy orders the construction of strong houses and bulwarks. This militaristic activity, however, is masked by a public health mission:

But to colore
 His endeuoure
 He dyd those places name
 Houses for clarkes
 And the bulwarckes
 Lodgyngis for blynde & lame (ll. 545–550)

Doctors and sites of miraculous healing (l. 562) extend the power of the church into both the bodies and the population-sustaining lands of England. Philargyrie no longer has to settle for the simple threat of violence when his minions can convince the populace to welcome his dominance as beneficial for their health. In this combination of quasi-colonial occupation and health-care, Philargyrie captures the biopolitical conjunction of power's management of death and life, its insinuation into the basic level of physical existence by both controlling the physical milieu, the environment, in which the population lives, and taking care of its physical health at the level of the individual body.

The instrumentalization of care, like that which is exposed in Piers's judgment of deserving recipients of charity in the community on the half acre, appears when Hypocrisy rebels from Philargyrie and seeks to draw away his

base of material support in the population. He recalls Philargyrie's 'rod of hunger' and its ability to inspire obedience; only he recasts it as a form of care, while at the same time emphasizing that this form of care is also a kind of discipline that works through humanity's bare, animal life:

And it is lyke
That they wyll stycke
To me alwaye at nede
For houndis are wont
Freshly to hunte
For them that do them fede (ll. 785–790)

Where Philargyrie brandished the threat of starvation, Hypocrisy articulates instead the power of nourishment. Where the narrative began with power that 'took life and let live', Hypocrisy realizes a more effective potential for control in 'making live and letting die'. In fact, Hypocrisy articulates the simultaneous action of biopolitical control and the forces of 'necro-economics' in his refinement of Philargyrie's methods for exercising power. The dependency of the population upon the distribution of resources by the landowners (a major problem for mid-Tudor commonwealth writers, as Kenneth Graham has shown) means that the economic power of the landowning elite entails the capacity to 'let die' so as to ensure, in Crowley's analysis, the docility of those who are allowed to live in exchange for their labor power in order to feed the giant of agrarian capitalism.⁴⁶ According to Philaute, the upstart who exposes Hypocrisy's betrayal to Philargyrie, what Hypocrisy offers is a chance to partake of the plenty he enjoys, but the gifts he distributes are merely 'pyggis of your owne sow' (l. 1204). The population consumes itself as the products of its labor are returned in alienated form as the falsely gratuitous gifts of the economically powerful.

The success of Philaute's oration with the people of Nodnol (London) ushers in a new phase of rapacious consumption. Philaute's methods echo Philargyrie's opening speech, in which a vast array of raw materials, commodities, lands, and infrastructure are yoked together in service of a singular appetitive urge, no longer so subtly masked by a religious purpose. Philaute, unlike Hypocrisy, does not try to moderate Philargyrie's consumption of gold, so when the treasure runs out, he offers the giant lead, stones, and timber

46 Montag W., "Necro-economics: Adam Smith and Death in the Life of the Universal", *Radical Philosophy* 134 (2005) 7–17; Graham K. J. E., "Distributive Measures: Theology and Economics in the Writings of Robert Crowley", *Criticism* 47,2 (2005) 137–158.

(ll. 1278–1279). He sells off forts and estates to try to replenish the gold supply, before ultimately resorting to raising rents ‘From fyue grotes to a pounce’ (l. 1315). The Protestant elite brings about an even more direct and voracious form of profit-seeking agrarian capitalism. When even Philaute’s rack-renting fails, Philargyrie finally uses his last means of enforcing his will:

Then gan this God
To take the rode
Of hunger in his fyst
And sayde that he
Woulde fylled be
No man shoulde him resiste.
Then wyth strokes sore
He smote the pore
And then they gan to crye
To god almyght
For them to fyght
Agaynst Philargyrie (ll. 1325–1336)

The bodies of the poor signify post-Reformation England’s incomplete transformation, as the intensification of economic processes like enclosure and rack-renting ultimately confront Crowley, in his personification of such processes, as power’s grip on the basic maintenance of physical life. The starvation of the poor follows from a series of raids on their means of physical survival. The 1540s were a time of enormous price inflation, a complex, systemic problem with a biological effect that is, by contrast, relatively simple for those who cannot afford bread.⁴⁷ With Philargyrie, Crowley makes the agent of such starvation equally simple by embodying the intersection of economics, politics, religion, and the body through personification allegory. Philargyrie and his minions allow Crowley to trace the movements of religious reform and elite politics through England’s physical landscape and onto the bodies of its population, capturing power and its mechanisms in one, reductive sweep. Hypocrisy and Philaute are less separate personifications than extensions of Philargyrie, whose ubiquity, described by Crowley in his prologue, is an intensely material fact: enclosure, rack-renting, and the export of raw materials reveal his presence. Personification translates these complicated processes of cultural, economic, and ecological transformation into a form of bodily power and violence.

47 Johnston, “From Edward III” 49.

The reduction of this complexity to a personified agent makes the political solution with which the poem concludes possible, as a version of King Edward VI takes up his sword and drives out the giant: 'And then all thyngs were well' (l. 1414). In Crowley's wishful vision of a vengeful king, with sword in one hand and bible in another, sovereign violence would end the crisis by driving away the parasites that interpose themselves between the people and the fruits of their labor. The contrast this establishes between the exceptional and direct application of sovereign violence and the more diffuse and quotidian power represented by Philargyrie captures the true achievement of this type of personification. Where the unnamed king who concludes the poem is a mask for the young King Edward VI, the adversary this sovereign would destroy is nothing less than the biopolitics of agrarian capitalism, which operates via a dispersed agency that must be consolidated prosopopoeically in order for readers to think with it and to imagine ways of changing it.

Philargyrie of greate Britayne extends this capacity of personification to a new moment of crisis after Crowley encountered it in *Piers Plowman*, the poem he had edited a year previously. As with Langland's *Hunger*, Crowley uses Philargyrie to make visible the social forces and material conditions within which and through which institutional power and individual bodies are constituted and controlled in an agrarian economy. This capacity of personification attunes politics to the body as it is formed by and interacts with otherwise unrepresentable networks of land, labor, technology, social relations, and institutional power, capturing history in motion through the personification of broad effects of power rather than simply the actions of 'actual, historical persons', and 'abstract ideas'.

Conclusion

Philargyrie motivates both the rise of the Catholic Church in England and the triumph of the new Protestant regime, but he does so not just as an allegorical puppet-master directly manipulating specific historical actors through his fictive agency, but by rhetorically championing practices immanent within the economic infrastructure of early modern English society and by allying himself with religious rhetoricians (Hyprocrisy and Philaute) who will fit their doctrine to his purpose. He mediates the manipulation of a population's attachment to religion and their material form of life as workers within a physical landscape taken up with mercantile production. Philargyrie draws together a number of material conditions (enclosure, the infrastructure of the agrarian economy, world trade, and finance) that represent the point at which power

meets the physical support for the survival of the population—the land and its products. In this sense, Philargyrie makes visible the biopolitical ‘domain’ that is ‘control over relations between the human race, or human beings insofar as they are a species, insofar as they are living beings, and their environment, the milieu in which they live’.⁴⁸ The management of bodies in terms of environment and population was already immanent within the forms of agrarian ecology and economy portrayed by *Piers Plowman* in the late-fourteenth century, and Crowley adapted Langland’s method of prosopopoeically embodying the conjuncture of power and physical life. Late medieval and early modern agrarian improvers understood that “To study the health of the population, one must study as well the “environmental factors” with an eye to governing and adjusting them so as to optimize the population itself as a productive force’.⁴⁹ Hunger and Philargyrie make this process visible and enact the latent violence such disciplinary regimes perform on the bodies of the laboring population. Langland’s development of the capacity of personification to consolidate religious discourse, economic relations, ecological conditions, and social structures goes a long way towards explaining *Piers Plowman*’s ongoing importance to the radical reformers of sixteenth-century England, as Crowley used this method to achieve a mode of representation adequate to the systemic complexity of the new economic and religious situation of the mid-Tudor era.

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48 Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended* 245.

49 Medovoi, “The Biopolitical Unconscious” 128.

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The Personification of the Human Subject in Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*

Brenda Machosky

With three voluminous books as the first installment, *The Faerie Queene* was proposed as a grand epic indeed when Spenser published them in 1590, with introductory dedicatory verses and an appended Letter to Sir Walter Raleigh explaining the purpose and structure of the poem. He alluded to plans for twelve books depicting *the twelve priuate morall vertues* of Aristotle,¹ intermingled with his own version of the Arthurian legend; all in honor and celebration of his sovereign, Queen Elizabeth. He contemplated another twelve books (for a total of 24), focused on the *polliticke vertues*.² The second installment appeared in 1596 with the publication of Books 4–6. In the mode of Homer, Vergil, Ariosto, and Tasso, all of whom he names, and arguably Dante (whom he does not mention), Spenser seemed intent on writing the great English epic, and securing his place as England's Poet Laureate—an honor he earned only unofficially, after his death and burial in Westminster Abbey, near the tomb of Geoffrey Chaucer. He set the work in England's mythical Arthurian past, an appropriate move given the Tudor claims of descent from Arthur. As he put it in the "Letter to Raleigh", by *being coloured with an historicall fiction* the poem would not only be a *delight to read* but also kept itself *furthest from the daunger of enuy, and suspition of present time*.³

While Arthur served as the work's consistent epic hero and intervened in each of the six published books, the moral virtues that constitute a 'noble person' were each to be represented by particular adventures, often by a relevant quest, that would eventually reveal the ideal of that virtue. Thus, in the first book, the Red Cross Knight (later revealed to be Saint George, the patron saint of England) sets off to free the maiden Una's parents, who are being held captive by a dragon. Red Cross is the figure for Holiness, but it takes twelve long

1 "Letter to Sir Walter Raleigh", in Spenser E., *Spenser: The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton, text ed. H. Yamashita – T. Suzuki (Harlow etc.: 2001) 714–718. References to the "Letter to Raleigh" will be given by line number from this edition, here l. 19.

2 "Letter to Raleigh" ll. 18–21.

3 "Letter to Raleigh" ll. 9–12.

Cantos that describe his many misjudgments, Arthur's life-saving interventions, and Una's soul-saving efforts before he earns that title. Book Two tells of the trials and tribulations of Guyon, a figure of Temperance, accompanied by the restraining Palmer, in his quest to destroy the pleasure-filled Bower of Bliss. Book Three focuses on Chastity, as figured in the female knight Britomart, who seeks the knight Artegall after falling in love with his image in Merlin's magic mirror. As revealed in that mirror, this pair will produce the line leading to the Tudors. In the original publication of 1590, Britomart unites a pair of lovers, Scudamour and Amoret, to conclude the book, which is revised in the second publication, where she frees the captive female lover but her beloved has disappeared so that the lovers' story may continue. In 1596, Spenser published the second version of the poem, changing the end of Book Three and adding three more books. Book Four celebrates Friendship, not as much through its named heroes Cambel and Telamond as through its myriad examples of devotion. In Book Five, Britomart's mysterious beloved Artegall finally appears, figuring the virtue of Justice (and allegorizing the current state of Ireland). The knight of Book Six is Sir Calidore, whose story works out the virtue Courtesie. These six books constitute the material published in Spenser's lifetime.

A decade after Spenser's unexpected and early death in 1599, what was apparently (but not conclusively proven to be) his last effort on *The Faerie Queene* was published by Matthew Lownes in the folio edition of 1609⁴ [Fig. 4.1] as *Two Cantos of Mutabilitie* enumerated as *Cantos* vi and vii of Book VII with an additional canto viii, called *vnperrfite* and consisting of only two stanzas.

There is no evidence to prove that Spenser enumerated these *Cantos*, or that he didn't. The verse style unique to *The Faerie Queene* is consistent, and there's little doubt that Spenser wrote the lines. While there is a reference, as in the previous books, to a virtue, *The Legend of Constancie*, there is no knight named. Within each of the six published books, there are often lengthy episodes suspended from the main action of the book. Thus, the material of the *Cantos* constitutes a complete episode in Spenserian style that recounts the Titaness Mutability's ascent to the heavens; her frightening challenge to the gods who reign there; her logical and rhetorical appeal to Dame Nature for rule over the heavens in addition to her active earthly rule;⁵ and Dame Nature's expedient and firm denial of this request:

4 Grogan J. (ed.), *Celebrating Mutabilitie: Essays on Spenser's Mutabilitie Cantos* (Manchester – New York: 2010) 1.

5 J.B. Lethbridge argues that Mutability already rules over the earth and this is never in question. Her petition to Dame Nature is to be 'sovereign of the gods' as well as 'sovereign of Men'. See Lethbridge J.B., "Spenser's Last Days: Ireland, Career, Mutability, Allegory", idem (ed.).

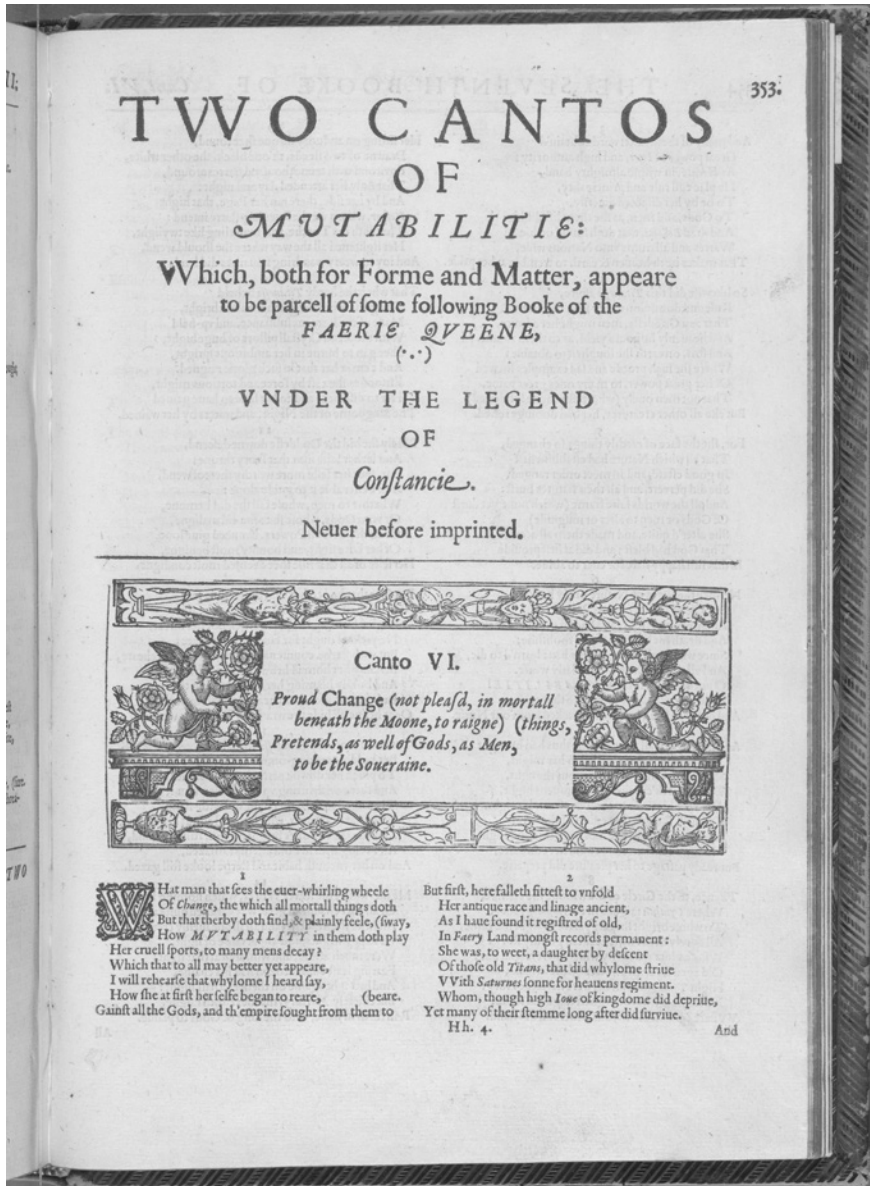


FIGURE 4.1 *Opening of Two Cantos of Mutabilitie*. Edmund Spenser, *The faerie queene* [...] (London, H. Lownes for Mathew Lownes: 1609) 353. Cambridge, MA, Houghton Library, Harvard University, STC 23083.

COURTESY OF THE HOUGHTON LIBRARY.

I well consider all that ye haue sayd,
 And find that all things stedfastnes doe hate
 And changed be: yet being rightly wayd
 They are not changed from their first estate;
 But by their change their being doe dilate:
 And turning to themselues at length againe,
 Doe worke their owne perfection so by fate:
 Then ouer them Change doth not rule and raigne;
 But they raigne ouer change, and doe their states maintaine. (7.7.58)⁶

In other words, the state of change is itself constant.

Cease therefore daughter further to aspire,
 And thee content thus to be rul'd by me: (7.7.59)

Thus concludes Mutability's rapid ascent and even more rapid dismissal.⁷ Immediately following Nature's pronouncement at the conclusion of 7.7, there is the 'imperfect' (*vnperfite*) two-stanza canto 8 in which the poet reflects on Mutability's appeal and acknowledges the predominance of change in the human world (7.8.1) and thinks on Nature's promise of a time to come *when no more Change shall be* (7.8.2), that is, when all is at rest and time no longer exists. Implicitly, this would be the time of Mutability's death. The poet concludes by acknowledging how *all that moueth, doth in Change delight* and simultaneously yearning for a divine vision, *that Sabaoth's sight, when all shall rest eternally* (7.8.2; emphasis added). Certainly this episode would fit into a 'Legend of Constancie' but there is no surrounding narrative, nor any evidence of what Spenser had in mind for Book 7 as a whole, if indeed it was still envisioned as such. The fragmentary presentation of these *Cantos* leaves the impression of an unfinished poem, and there has been thorough and inconclusive debate about how the Mutability Cantos affect the wholeness of the epic.

To some extent, simply because it cannot be conclusively proven, it is little matter whether we believe that *The Faerie Queene* is an unfinished poem, or if

Edmund Spenser: New and Renewed Directions (Cranbury, NJ: 2006) 302–336, here 322–323, *passim*.

6 References to the poem will be given in the text by book, canto and stanza, and hereafter included in the text.

7 For an analysis of Weatherby and the analogy of the fall, see Anderson J., "Mutability and Mortality: Reading Spenser's Poetry", in Grogan J. (ed.), *Celebrating Mutabilitie: Essays on Spenser's Mutabilitie Cantos*, (Manchester – New York: 2010) 246–274.

Spenser intended the *Mutabilitie Cantos* as his final effort or if he intentionally abandoned the project and 'intended' the *Cantos* as a last word. Nonetheless, there are several recent essays and one entire collection focused exclusively on the *Mutabilitie Cantos*. To some degree, every essay must announce its author's view of the intentionality crux. In the *Spenser Encyclopedia* entry on 'closure', Balachandra Rajan provides two useful 'composite versions' of the arguments for and against closure.⁸ If we take Spenser at his word in the "Letter to Raleigh", where he lays out the grand scheme of 12 books and hints at 24, then *The Faerie Queene*, as it now stands in its poetic immortality, is something of a failure, or a fragment, of its intended 'wholeness'. Noting that the "Letter to Raleigh" is *not* published with the 1596 expanded version of the poem,⁹ it is conceivable that Spenser was changing course or working to wrap it up in some way. Spenser died from a sudden-onset illness in 1599, and it is impossible to know what he had planned for the poem.

Despite all the uncertainty that surrounds these *Cantos*, and maybe because of that uncertainty, the positioning of this final personification of Elizabeth as a 'mere' human being, both ruler over and subject to change and time, puts the entire poetic project of *The Faerie Queene* into doubt. Arguably, like Mutability, the poem ends in 'ruin', despite its awesome attempt to reveal the immortality of its subject, Queen Elizabeth, and to secure the reputation of its writer, Edmund Spenser. This ruin, however, reveals something other than originally intended: the image of the human subject, a modern (or early modern) version of this Subject, in the textual mirror supposed to reflect the many facets of an absolute ruler, most significantly her divine investiture.¹⁰

Embodying the Queen

The allegory of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* was intended to reveal the divine aspect of Queen Elizabeth as an absolute monarch, a divinely endowed queen who was also a virtuous woman. Spenser himself made this clear in the "Letter to Raleigh" appended to the initial publication of Books 1–3 in 1590:

8 Balachandra R., "Closure", in Hamilton A.C. (ed.), *Spenser Encyclopedia* (Toronto – Buffalo: 1990) 169–170.

9 There is an argument that this was possibly merely an oversight by the printer in 1596. Wilson-Okamura D.S., "Belphoebe and Gloriana", *English Literary Renaissance* 39.1 (2009) 47–73, here 71, n. 61.

10 For one reading of the text as a mirror held up to Elizabeth, see Miller D.L., *The Poem's Two Bodies: The Poetics of the 1590 Faerie Queene* (Princeton, NJ: 1988) 29–31, 98–101.

For considering she beareth two persons, the one of a most royall Queene or Empresse, the other of a most vertuous and beautiful Lady.¹¹

For this *two persons* claim, Spenser apparently borrows the structural theology of the 'king's two bodies', a vestige of the Middle Ages, resurrected for political purposes (for and against a female sovereign) during Elizabeth's reign. As the Elizabethan contemporary Edward Plowden put it (referring to Edward VI as well as to Elizabeth):

For the King has in him two Bodies, viz., a Body natural, and a Body politic. His Body natural (if it be considered in itself) is a Body mortal, subject to all Infirmities that come by Nature or Accident [...] and to the like Defects that happen to the natural Bodies of other People. But his body politic is a body that cannot be seen or handled, consisting of Policy and Government, and constituted for the Direction of the People, and the Management of the public weal, and this Body is utterly void of Infancy, and old Age, and other natural Defects, [...] and for this Cause, what the King does in his Body politic, cannot be invalidated or frustrated by any Disability in his natural Body.¹²

In sum, the *Body politic* is immortal, unchangeable, virtually perfect and invisible, while the *Body natural* is subject to error and decay, and perceptible to the senses. And yet, it is the natural body, with all its defects and disabilities that makes it possible for the body politic to appear in an individual, which in turn is constituted by the diversity of a nation's people.

As to her body natural, it is well known that Elizabeth did much to forestall the ravages of time, with ageless portraits throughout her reign, and a virgin mystique that continued well beyond her child-bearing years. The Ditchley Portrait, painted in 1592, when Elizabeth was about 59 years old, depicts an ageless but youthful queen [Fig. 4.2]. As to her body politic, the famous line from the *Speech to the Troops at Tilbury* about having the heart and stomach of a king was not merely rhetorical, but could be taken quite literally. She allegorized the monarchy itself with a structure in which two bodies, that of the mortal queen and that of the immortal 'king' appear in the same space at the same time, co-existent without being synonymous. This structure is allegorical, not because one body signifies or *means* the other, but because the material body

11 "Letter to Raleigh" l. 35.

12 Quoted in Kantorowicz E.H., *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: 1957) 7.



FIGURE 4.2 Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, Queen Elizabeth I ('The Ditchley portrait') (c. 1592). Oil on canvas. London, National Portrait Gallery. COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

supports the appearance of the mystical one.¹³ In the poem, Spenser personifies these two bodies in two significant figures (and arguably many more). The body politic is figured in Gloriana, the Fairy Queen herself, the poem's namesake and the governing force of Fairyland, but a figure that we never see, as David Scott Wilson-Okamura puts it, 'a kind of oxygen, in which the characters live and move and have their being'.¹⁴ The body natural is figured most obviously and consistently in Belpheobe (as identified directly by Spenser), a chaste virgin devotee and adopted daughter of Diana, and a woman warrior modeled on Vergil's Camilla.¹⁵ It seems likely that the queen in her body natural is also figured in several other female characters. In an essay that explores these two predominant figures of Elizabeth, Wilson-Okamura suggests that Gloriana, as invisible and infallible, is a personification of 'queenship, the institution'. While he does not use the term 'personification', the trope accurately captures the figure as 'not the monarch', but 'monarchy', an abstract concept in need of embodiment in order to have effect in the world. It fits James Paxson's definition of personification as 'the translation of any non-human quantity into a sentient human capable of thought and language, possessing *voice* and *face*'.¹⁶ Spenser is able to preserve the abstraction and invisibility of the English body politic (and the reputation of his sovereign) by writing *of* a personification that never appears as such, that never becomes sense-perceptible, but appears in and through the structure of the literary text that *is* the Fairy Queen as *The Faerie Queene*.

Spenser both reifies Elizabeth by personifying her as a text but simultaneously resists that reification by making that text an inadequate container, an incomplete body. Like Dame Nature, who appears (sort of) in the *Mutabilitie Cantos*

with a veile that wimpled every where,
Her head and face was hid, that mote to none appeare, (7.7.5)

Gloriana remains concealed by the text that enables her to appear. This, I believe, is the governing conceit of the poem, to bring to appearance a divine

13 For this redefinition of allegory as a structure that supports two things in the same space at the same time, see Machosky B., *Structures of Appearing: Allegory and the Work of Literature* (New York: 2012) 52–53.

14 Wilson-Okamura, "Belpheobe and Gloriana" 65.

15 For the Camilla parallels, see *ibid.* 52–53.

16 Paxson JJ., *The Poetics of Personification*, Literature, Culture, Theory 6 (Cambridge: 1994) 42.

image of Elizabeth's immortal part, and this is why I believe that Dante's epic influenced Spenser.¹⁷ At least when he began this poetic quest, Spenser sought to create a poetic edifice, a structure, that would support a divine vision of the *Body politic* that invested Elizabeth with a transcendent power. However, the poem may have changed from a thing that expressed 'thinking as content' to a thing that showed 'thinking as process', and in that change, raised the very question of identity as a stable thing with a fixed metaphysical structure.¹⁸

In the two bodies theory, the monarch lives in the body natural but rules in the body politic. As a poem *The Faerie Queene* is an attempt to manifest the eternal glory of that body politic, not in an actual body but in the body that is the poem. The 'personification' of the body politic is the poem itself. Understanding Elizabeth's 'sacred transformation' at her coronation as the investiture of a natural body with the *corpus mysticum* of the realm', David L. Miller transfers this significance to the poem: "This incarnation of empire is the central "figure" of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, at once its founding trope and its title character'.¹⁹ *The Faerie Queene* is the Fairy Queen, Gloriana, and Gloriana is the personification of England, of the monarchy that *is* England. But, as in the Tudor courts of law, efforts to keep the two 'bodies' distinct are frequently confounded: 'all the Christological problems of the early Church concerning the Two Natures once more were actualized and resuscitated in the early absolute monarchy'.²⁰

To further multiply the bodies, while England's queen is certainly figured in Gloriana, she is also figured in other powerful female figures. As Angus Fletcher argues, Gloriana is 'at once the avenging Britomart, the melting Amoret, the chaste, athletic Belpheobe, the transparently beautiful Florimel, the just Mercilla, the truthful Una—and she is others whom we have not met, who were to be heroines of later books'.²¹ I would like to suggest that Elizabeth is also figured in the Titaness Mutability, who appears in the posthumously

17 For a more extensive argument about the connection between Dante and Spenser, see Machosky, *Structures of Appearing* 97–100. See also Hamilton A.C., *The Structure of Allegory in 'The Faerie Queene'* (Oxford: 1961) 30–43; and Tosello M., "Spenser's Silence about Dante" in *Studies in English Literature* 17,1 (1977) 59–66.

18 Teskey G., "Night Thoughts on Mutability", in Grogan J. (ed.), *Celebrating Mutabilitie: Essays on Spenser's Mutabilitie Cantos* (Manchester – New York: 2010) 24–39, here 24.

19 The poem is an allegory that personifies the *corpus mysticum* of England as such, as Miller has effectively argued. Miller, *The Poem's Two Bodies* 68.

20 Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies* 17; also referenced by Miller, *The Poem's Two Bodies* 69.

21 As indicated here, with a gesture to as-yet unwritten characters, Fletcher is squarely in the 'unfinished poem' contingent. Fletcher A., *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* (Princeton, NJ: 2012) 275.

appended fragment of Book 7. As some kind of conclusion to *The Faerie Queene*, finalized or not, there is a figure of temporality that emphasizes the changeable state of human existence. The poem does not end with the manifestation of a divinely invested monarch, the birth of an empire (as in the *Aeneid*) or a divine vision (as in Dante's *Comedia*). Instead of a personification of the eternal 'king' in the body of a queen, there is instead a personification of the monarch as all too human.

It is the body natural that dominates, not only in the last words of the poem, in *The Mutability Cantos*, but in the personification of a powerful but fallible human being that governs the six published books. Okamura-Wilson argues that Belphoebe, the virtuous lady, figures the monarch, not the monarchy, the 'private body' of the queen who is 'not exempt from error or, in his epic, from criticism', and that the entirety of the published *Faerie Queene* (books 1–6) is about the queen in her 'body natural'.

And yet for all of her faults, this is her poem. It is the private queen rather than the public, the body natural rather than the politic, that Spenser has written stories about so far.²²

Weighing in on the 'is it finished?' debate around *The Faerie Queene*, Wilson-Okamura answers, 'no.' Spenser has not written anything at all (yet) about the body politic, about the monarchy as such, (and then he would not have the chance). These are the books 'Spenser did not write',²³ but perhaps they are hinted at in the beginnings of Book 7, where he sees Spenser 'switching gears' and developing a fresh and new style.²⁴ Wilson-Okamura suggests that the real part two (books 6–12) of *The Faerie Queene* would mirror Vergil's epic structure, and there we would have seen the critique of the institution, of the *Body politic*, and that is where we would see Gloriana. Perhaps the *Mutability Cantos* show us Spenser's first venture in the direction of the political part two of his poem, and perhaps it gives us an indication of how daunting, nay impossible, that task might have proved.

As a personification of Elizabeth, Mutability figures both her immortal aspect and her subjection to time.²⁵ As a Titaness, Mutability occupies a

22 Wilson-Okamura, "Belphoebe and Gloriana" 68.

23 Ibid. 68, *passim*.

24 Ibid. 72.

25 Robert Lanier Reid specifically does not see Mutability as a figure for Elizabeth but as a figure for those who defy her. 'That Spenser's pagan gods mirror aristocrats means that Mutabilitie also defies England's monarch'. In this way the 'Cantos form a sharp reversal' of the predominantly laudatory Books 1–6 (according to Reid). Further, he interprets that 'Mutabilitie's assault on Cynthia (most heavenly of the Virgin Queen's divine personae)

unique temporal position, both immortal in her being and yet, as a member of a defeated lineage of the gods, she suffers a kind of finitude in her existence. This ontological constitution makes her an ideal figure for an ageing Elizabeth. By the late 1590s, Elizabeth was undeniably nearing the end of her mortal life, and she had denied herself the only kind of physical immortality to which humankind can pretend: progeny. Certainly Spenser's poem in and of itself lends the queen the kind of poetic immortality celebrated in many poems of the day. However, even while he strove to grant her perfection and immortality, Spenser also needed to contend with her imperfections and pending death. This may be why Spenser wrote his last known work on the poem with the quest of Mutability, a quasi-immortal being contending with her own end, the body politic suffering the fate of its body natural.

Bodies Private and Politic

The two bodies theology of monarchy was appropriated from centuries earlier but with renewed emphasis during Elizabeth's reign. Miller provides important analysis of how the medieval theology of 'the king's two bodies', as thoroughly analyzed by Ernst Kantorowicz, is worked into the structure, function and purpose of *The Faerie Queene's* first three books (to which his study is limited).²⁶ Kantorowicz's work on the theory in general provides the necessary historical background.²⁷ Subsequent to a lengthy article, Miller went on to produce the most extensive treatment of the two bodies theory in relation to Spenser, *The Poem's Two Bodies: The Poetics of the 1590 Faerie Queene*. As his title indicates, Miller's object of study is the poem itself and *its* two bodies, in what he calls an 'aesthetic theology' that follows from the political theology of the king's two bodies. With the term 'aesthetic theology' Miller refers to the intended wholeness of Spenser's poem. 'Like Christianity, Spenser's art fantasizes its own perfection in terms of access to a spiritual body replete with

implies Elizabeth's subjection to ageing and mortality, and Faunus's lewd invasion implies disrespect from Elizabeth's Irish subjects'. Reid R.L., "Spenser's Mutability Song: Conclusion or Transition?", in Grogan J. (ed.), *Celebrating Mutabilitie: Essays on Spenser's Mutabilitie Cantos* (Manchester – New York: 2010) 61–84, here 64–65. My reading does not deny these contrary attributes but rather argues that they are a division within the body of Elizabeth herself, her literal, mortal body and her figuratively invested one.

26 Miller *The Poem's Two Bodies* 68–82.

27 For the medieval origins and Tudor era applications of the theology of the king's two bodies, see Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies* esp. Chapter 1.

truth', a 'perhaps perfect human being'.²⁸ Miller locates the promised totality of the poem in the endlessly deferred union of Arthur and Gloriana, but also notes that the historical Elizabeth 'represents [for Spenser] the achieved form of this unity' in his poem.²⁹ The poem's allegory teaches its readers what they already know, that the body of Elizabeth is invested with a divine substance.³⁰ It does this by a metaleptic reversal in which the abstract term of a relation 'elevates itself by rejecting as *ontologically* belated the material original from which it was formed' (emphasis added).³¹ In other words, the phenomenological form that indicates the metaphysical significance actually comes after the meaning, not before.

An essential but often ignored component of the two bodies theology is a living, breathing, fated-to-die human being. As much as we may want to focus on the transcendence of that human being into something more than human, something whole and complete rather than fragmented and unfinished, something that exists in perpetuity rather than being subject to decay, something that can assimilate all defects into a perfected state rather than being mired in error and inconstancy, our gaze is forced downwards to the merely human, and to the poem written by a human hand. Mutability is the figure of both this desired transcendence and this unavoidable material truth. J.B. Lethbridge fits the *Mutabilitie Cantos* to the completed body (or unfinished torso) of *The Faerie Queene* by suggesting that it was Spenser's own impending mortality that led to the *Mutabilitie Cantos* in their eventually published form. Lethbridge believes that more of *The Faerie Queene* had been written, perhaps destroyed in the attack on Kilcolman, perhaps lost by a messenger en route to England, and he offers admittedly inconclusive but enticing evidence to support this theory.³² Regarding the *Mutabilitie Cantos*, Lethbridge argues that 'they are Spenser's last words', but they came from a poet facing his own death. Paradoxically, Lethbridge asserts that 'the Cantos as we have them are not, or are no longer, part of the original *Faerie Queene*'.³³ And yet, despite the 'balance tip[ped] toward the negative', Lethbridge also suggests that Spenser somewhat hurriedly wrote, revised, or most likely 'compiled' these verses, as 'an attempt to salvage what could be salvaged of his life's work', his epic poem, and 'his commitment to poetry above all else'.³⁴

28 Miller, *The Poem's Two Bodies* 71–72.

29 Ibid. 98.

30 Ibid. 93.

31 Ibid. 76.

32 For this argument, see Section 11 of Lethbridge, "Spenser's Last Days" 302–310.

33 Ibid. 312.

34 Ibid. 330.

I would like to borrow from Lethbridge's conclusions as a sympathetic foundation for my own proposal that Mutability is the personification of being human, in a presciently modern way, condemned to a finite state but capable of contending with the eternal³⁵ and fantasizing about her (our) own divine nature. In particular, the *Mutabilitie Cantos* address the unspoken condition of Elizabeth's mortality, and Spenser's as well. The poet's own coming to terms with his mortality and the realization that the aging queen shares this experience, is embodied in the figure of Mutability, striving with impressive but ultimately inadequate means to transcend her mortal condition. Technically, this makes the poem a failure in the aesthetic terms it has set for itself.³⁶ Despite deploying a politically savvy humility, Spenser strove, like his epic poet predecessors, to create a complete and nearly perfect work of art that embodied England. Specifically he cites Arthur as 'a brave knight, perfected in twelue priuate morall vertues'.³⁷ But also, more broadly, he sought to imitate Vergil explicitly, modeling his poem on the two-part twelve-book *Aeneid*. Implicitly, I think, he hoped to achieve the kind of divine vision of the queen's 'invisible body' that would be similar to Dante's vision of God at the end of the *Divine Comedy*. Instead, in the *Mutabilitie Cantos*, Spenser succeeds in personifying what would become modern subjectivity, a state in which the human attempts to take the vacated place of the gods (who, according to Nietzsche, have long since fled).

Personification Undone

Spenser draws the figure of Mutability from the pre-Olympian pantheon, creating a new descendent from the race of Titans. She seeks to reinvest her being with the infinite power to which she has been denied access, to transcend her relegation to earthly and mortal time. Her argument is that all things are mutable, and therefore, change is the dominant force in the world and thus Mutability should rule the universe, not just hold sway over earthly things. The Titaness summarizes her claim after an extensive pageant of the many changes in the world (seasons, months, days and hours) called up by Dame Nature

35 One can consider the not far off Cartesian *cogito* as another example. Instead of God bestowing identity upon human beings, Descartes shows how human beings confer identity upon themselves.

36 Miller admits that the promised totality of the poem's narrative, the union of Arthur and Gloriana, remains infinitely deferred, but the historical Elizabeth herself has achieved this unity. Miller *The Poem's Two Bodies* 71, 98.

37 "Letter to Raleigh" l. 19.

herself. Sure that the cycles of time shown in the parade constitute Nature's endorsement of her claim, Mutability concludes:

Lo, mighty mother, now be iudge and say,
Whether in all thy creatures more or lesse
CHANGE doth not raign and beare the greatest sway;
For, who sees not, that *Time* on all doth pray?
But *Times* do change and moue continually.
So nothing here long standeth in one stay:
Wherefore, this lower world who can deny
But to be subiect still to *Mutabilitie*? (7.7.47)

Mutability here personifies herself, accurately, as *Time*. As a manifestation of temporality, Mutability both announces her strongest argument and undoes her claim for sovereignty over heaven and earth. She reveals herself as (merely) a personification, and perhaps, like all persons, personifications must come to their ends. According to Paxson's study of *The Faerie Queene*, the 'governing poetic code for Spenserian personification is the narrativization of the trope as it comes into or goes out of existence'. The story of key personified figures is most often focused on a 'moment of embodiment or disembodiment, facement or defacement'.³⁸ The figure of Duessa, also known as Fidessa, demonstrates this process. In Book 1, we witness her creation by Archimago, and eventually we see her 'taken apart' in a disrobing that is a literal deconstruction of her personified identity.³⁹ The *Mutabilitie Cantos* offer the defacement of the queen's divine aspect. In contrasting the two main figures of Elizabeth in the poem, Belpheobe (the lady) and Gloriana (the monarchy), Wilson-Okamura shows how the monarchical figure, Gloriana, cannot be criticized (indeed, never even appears) but the human figures for Elizabeth, especially Belpheobe, often reflect criticism.⁴⁰ Without the lewdness of Duessa's disassembling (1.8.47–48), the last known segment of the poem undoes the persona of the queen as body politic and reveals instead her exceptional but human constitution.

38 Paxson, *The Poetics of Personification* 139.

39 For a thorough analysis of Duessa as the personification of 'the very condition of "duplicity"' and its disrobing, see Paxson, *The Poetics of Personification* 151ff.

40 Wilson-Okamura takes the time to unpack the distinction 'Gloriana is the queen, and Belpheobe is the lady', that 'all Spenserians know [...] by heart'. He, too, connects this difference within the same historical person to the king's two bodies image (as he calls it). Wilson-Okamura, "Belpheobe and Gloriana" 66.

Mutability may be the most significant example of Paxson's reading of the poem as narrativizing the 'personification of personification' (even though Paxson does not mention this example). As a personification of Elizabeth, Mutability re-presents and simultaneously de-constructs the singular personification upon which the entire epic depends: the personification of the body politic, the immortal body of the monarch that the poem has been constructed to reveal. For six long and complex books, the image of the Faerie Queene has been constructed and projected in her union with Arthur. This is displaced by the figure of Mutability in the final book of the poem, and the image of ruin manifested by her defeat. This not only presents the end of Mutability's quest, but, by the undoing of the personification that is the poem, it also signals the failure of the poem to manifest a totality.

Following Paxson's reading of personification in regard to specific characters, we might consider this analysis in terms of the poem in its published entirety. The poem, especially the completed books 1–6, constitutes the 'coming into existence' of the reified person of Queen Elizabeth as the Fairie Queene, or as Belphebe (if following Wilson-Okamura's train of thought). The *Mutabilitie Cantos* might then be the narrative of this personification going out of existence. In his discussion of the body politic personification topos (though not in relation to *The Faerie Queene*), Paxson points out that translation of a conceptual abstraction (like society as the *Body politic*) into a personified body (the ubiquitous 'head of state' for example) requires the reification or 'dispersonification' of the 'concrete and living components that make up that conceptual abstraction'.⁴¹ Paxson does not extend this analysis to *The Faerie Queene* but it follows that if *The Faerie Queene* is the personification of Elizabeth's body politic, or her body natural, then not only the people of the realm but the human being Elizabeth herself is reified as a byproduct of the process of conceptual personification. The narrative of Mutability defaces the grand personification of not only the figure of the Faerie Queene but the poem itself as personification of the realm. In the *Mutabilitie Cantos* the poem's 'governing personification' is seen 'going out of existence', returned to a disillusioned and quasi-mortal state, which is why, I think, Spenser makes Mutability a Titaness, a divine being with a mortal fate.⁴²

41 Paxson, *The Poetics of Personification* 50–51.

42 For general argument, see *ibid.* 139. Specific application is mine.

Complete Incompleteness

If the *Mutabilitie Cantos* are a conclusion (of some sort or even, perhaps, simply by default), their fragmentary nature leads to an interpretation of *The Faerie Queene* itself as a fragment of what it would have been if finished whole. Louis Gilbert Freeman suggests that Spenser might have been drawing on 'the Renaissance visual art tradition of the *non finito*':

This stylistic mannerism derives from aesthetics that are ultimately Ovidian and that in the Renaissance revival came to reflect a larger interest in poetry of art as metamorphosis. Spenser's poetry clearly has much to do with the *non finito* in this sense, not only because it casts the poet as Proteus and alludes so often to tales from the *Metamorphoses* but also because *The Faerie Queene* evokes the unfinished in its digressive narrative unfolding of *entrelacement* and in its continual deferral of endings.⁴³

The poem, both in its fragmentary totality and in its fragment of a final book, becomes something of a cipher. The poem asks us to consider why the *Mutabilitie Cantos* were (most likely) the last things Spenser wrote for the poem, to consider whether he was dealing with the realization that his poem had only the 'false appearance' of totality, to question whether the epic effort he undertook could not produce the transcendent symbol he had hoped to create: the *corpus mysticum* of Queen Elizabeth. Whether intentionally attached or somewhat arbitrarily affixed, the *Mutabilitie Cantos* turn our attention back on the poem as an unfinished torso, a '*non finito*', or as a fragment, or more dramatically, a ruin.

The *Mutabilitie Cantos* direct us to look again at the queen. The divine totality, the eternal, unchanging part of the monarch, appears only through fragmentation, not in a singular figure manifesting the queen's invisible body but fractured into different personae. The divine queen is always already divided from herself. In order for the immortal body to maintain its divinity, it must separate itself—absolutely—from the taint of anything mortal. The imperfection of the divided body then frustrates the divine image, and it fractures yet again, irretrievably broken, ruined. In attempting to manifest the queen's divine being, Spenser set himself up for failure. This is evident as soon as he admits there is more than one personified figure for Queen Elizabeth, as the

43 Freeman L.G., "Vision, Metamorphosis, and the Poetics of Allegory in the *Mutabilitie Cantos*", *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 45,1 (2005) 65–95, here 67.

Faerie Queene and as Belpheobe (in the "Letter to Raleigh"). Within the first canto of the poem, Una, the personification of oneness (unity itself), is divided with the appearance of false images as personified in Duessa, who is further divided to become Fidessa.⁴⁴ Spenser seems to be playing out (however anachronistically) Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy of the human condition as the agony of individuation and art as its pretended cure.

Conclusion

In Spenser, allegory is a structure that mediates an early appearance of the human subject absolute unto itself. This 'Absolute Subject' will come into its full manifestation a few centuries later in Hegel's philosophical allegory, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. Hegel confronts a problem quite similar to Spenser's: how to manifest the infinite within the finite, *der Geist* (Spirit) within the human being, the universal confined to but not limited by particularity. In the end, Hegel resorts to a Christian image, the crucified Christ, figure of mortality and divinity.⁴⁵ In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel achieves the poetic end sought by Spenser, to manifest the divine in mortal materiality, a poem (of sorts). It takes an entire, dense, philosophical book to do so, and while Spenser failed to achieve this through figures reflecting Elizabeth as a divinely-invested monarch, he succeeded in revealing the experience of the infinite within the limits of the human, not only for the queen, not only for himself, but for modern human being in general.

The vision we get with the *Mutabilitie Cantos* as the poem's fitting end, is of a divinely invested monarch who is all human too. In the last book of the poem, whether intended or not, Spenser personifies not the divinity of Queen Elizabeth, but her humanness. With an impressive prescience, Spenser manifests an early image of the modern Subject, an image that will fully claim its own apotheosis in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. In the end, Spenser fails to grant his readers the promised vision of divinity. The Faerie Queen, like Dame Nature in 7.7, remains covered in the *coverte vele* of the incomplete poem. The figure that *does* appear in the startling conclusion of the poem is not only a personification of the multifaceted Elizabeth, but also a personification of human being in its modern state: striving for an infinite existence while condemned to worldly finitude. Spenser reveals that in the epoch of modernity, the subjective self, and not God or His divinely appointed monarch, will be the

44 See also Miller's analysis of Una as doubled. Miller, *The Poem's Two Bodies* 81–82.

45 Hegel G.W.F., *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (London: 1977) 493.

symbolic image that is the object of the quest for immortality. As I argued more fully in *Structures of Appearing*, ‘Mutability is the closest humankind can get to eternity, infinite in our finite and changeable existence’.⁴⁶

What is revealed at the (disputable) end of *The Faerie Queene*, in the *Mutabilitie Cantos*, is ‘the human’ as that ‘immortal part’ that is forever subjected to its own mortality. This is the human as a symbolic concept, in the pre-Romantic sense of the symbol as the remarkable coincidence of the ideal with the real, as something sacred, ‘the unity of the material and the transcendental object’ as Walter Benjamin described it.⁴⁷ The symbol cannot appear in and of itself, but only with the structural support of allegory, a structure that makes its appearance possible.⁴⁸ Because of the near perfection of his allegorically structured epic, Dante was able to present, not merely represent, a symbolic image of God in the final lines of his *Comedy*.⁴⁹ I believe Spenser originally sought to present the invisible body of his sovereign, her divine aspect, by means of the allegory that is *The Faerie Queene*. Although he fell far short of this intended symbol, he manifested a symbol more appropriate to his time, the ‘early modern’ era, the symbol that is the human. As a symbol, ‘the human’ cannot appear in itself. It, too, needs a kind of personification and an allegorical structure in order to appear, and that is the success in the ‘failure’ of *The Faerie Queene*. Despite Dame Nature’s final-sounding judgment, which returns Mutability to her rightful place in the changeable world, in the personification of Mutability, the human has realized its divine potential. For all practical purposes, the human has assumed the place of the divine, even if also confined to its mutable state.

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46 For a fuller version of this argument, see Machosky *Structures of Appearing*, Chapter 3.

47 Benjamin W., *The Origin of the German Tragic Drama*, trans. J. Osborne (London: 1977) 139.

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PART 3

Personification and the Modalities of Figuration



Framework, Personification, and Pisanello's Poetics

C. Jean Campbell

Tucked just inside the west wall of the Veronese church of San Fermo Maggiore, to the left as one enters the building, is one of Pisanello's earliest recognizable works [Fig. 5.1]. It consists of an elaborate painted framework for a marble high relief of the Resurrection executed by the shop of the Florentine sculptor Nanni di Bartolo ('Il Rosso'). Pisanello's portion of the ensemble includes a depiction of the Annunciation, framed by a representation of Paradise in the form of a verdant bower. The ensemble was commissioned as a family tomb monument by the son of Nicolò Brenzoni (†1422) and was completed in 1426.¹ The present paper will consider Pisanello's contribution to the Brenzoni monument as an early and formative moment in a practice that includes the great arch fresco of *St. George and the Princess* for the Pellegrini chapel at Sant'Anastasia in Verona, and the small-scale panels and medals he produced for princely patrons. The general contention is that Pisanello, more emphatically than any other painter of his time, operated as a painter of frameworks.

Since my question concerns the status and function of framework as a vehicle of Pisanello's inventive devotional work, I will not spend a great deal of time with the question of the Brenzoni monument as a collaborative complex. However, approaching Pisanello's part necessitates a brief characterization of the monument as a whole. The devout spectator before the Brenzoni monument in San Fermo is invited to assume a role in a drama that is framed

1 For the documents relating to the tomb and its commission, see Cordellier D., "Documenti e fonti su Pisanello (1395–1581 circa)", *Verona Illustrata: Rivista del Museo del Castelvecchio* 8 (1995), docs. 3–25. For a discussion of the monument and its iconography (with excellent photographic details and drawings of the frescoes), see Schmitt A., "Pisanello's Wandbild zum Grabmonument des Nicolò Brenzoni in San Fermo Maggiore, Verona", in Degenhart B. – Schmitt A. (eds.) *Pisanello und Bono da Ferrara* (Munich: 1995) 55–79, 279. While Schmitt focusses on Pisanello's contribution, Anne Markham Schulz (*Nanni di Bartolo e il portale di San Nicola a Tolentino* (Florence: 1997) 39–49, 165–205) discusses the tomb with an eye to the sculptor's contribution and provides detailed images of the sculptures. A comprehensive consideration of the monument as a collaborative enterprise in painting and sculpture has yet to be written, although steps in that direction are taken in Augusti A., "Verona, tra pittura e scultura: i monumenti Brenzoni e Serego", in Augusti A. (ed.), *Da Donatello a Sansovino: l'altra scultura del Rinascimento a Venezia e nel Veneto* (Rome: 2013) 93–102.

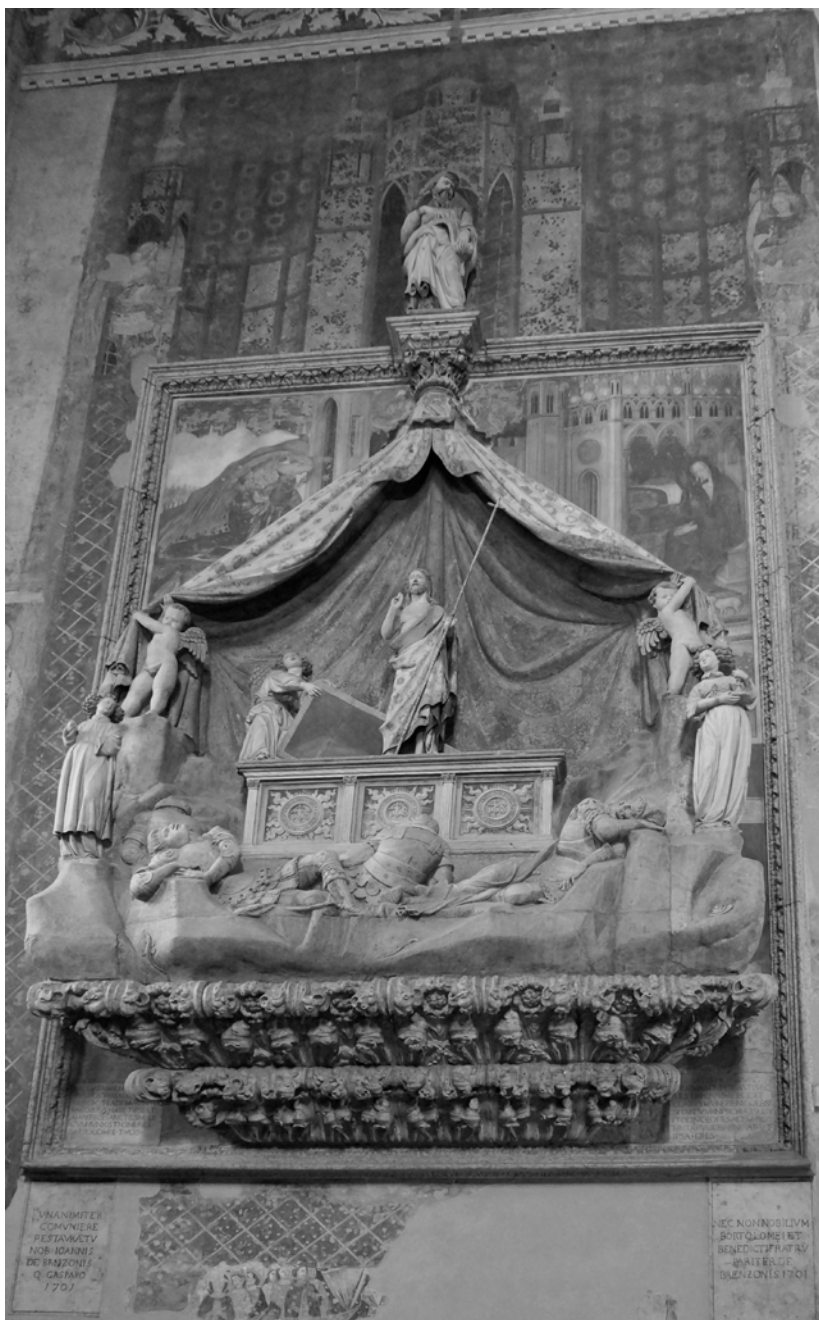


FIGURE 5.1 *Pisanello and Nanni di Bartolo, Brenzoni Monument (completed 1426). Multimedia wall painting and marble sculpture. San Fermo Maggiore, Verona.*
IMAGE © LAURA SOMENZI.

as an encounter with a fictive garden, the gates of which are guarded, in the uppermost register, by two standing archangels. The scenario recalls an event described in the *Legenda Aurea* in which Adam's son Seth appears as both spectator and speaking player in the scene of Christ's descent into Limbo. Citing Gregory of Nyssa, Jacopo initiates the eschatological cycle by putting the opening words in the mouth of Adam's son:

When I went to the gates of Paradise and prayed God to allow an angel to give me a little of the oil of mercy so that I might anoint the body of my father Adam, which was unwell, the angel Michael appeared to me and said: 'Labor not in praying by weeping (in the here and now) for the oil from the tree of mercy, which by no means shall you receive, not until five thousand, five hundred years have passed'.²

Seth's words introduce, in turn, the moment of their fulfilment, when Christ descends into Limbo, grasps Adam's hand and draws him up and out, delivering him into the hands of a Michael who, rather than blocking the path, now opens the gates and leads him to Paradise. As Jacobus indicates in describing Christ's Resurrection as 'the efficient cause of ours', its contemplation in light of the image of Paradise properly constitutes a double proof. It attests to the 'resurrection of the soul in this life and the body in the life to come'.³

It would certainly be possible to take the theological exposition of the imagery of the Brenzoni monument further in this vein, but this would inevitably move the discussion away from the task at hand, which is to describe the means of representation. Rather than looking for the kind of resolution offered by a tidy iconographic explanation, my hope is to keep the fiction and its pictorial

2 Voragine Jacobus de (Jacopo da Varazze) *Legenda Aurea*, ed. G.P. Maggioni, 2 vols. (Florence: 1998) II, 367: 'Cum iuissem ad portas paradise rogare dominum ut transmitteret mihi angelum suum et daret mihi de oleo misericordie, ut perungerem copus patris mei Ade, cum esset infirmus, apparuit mihi Michel angelus dicens: "Noli laborare lacrimis orando propter oleum ligni misericordie, quia nullomodo poteris ex eo accipere nisi quando comleti fuerint quinque milia quingenti anni"'. Here and below the translations of the *Legenda aurea* are mine. The translation of the passage in the standard English version (*The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. W.G. Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton: 1993) I, 222) captures the gist of the passage, but abridges the Latin text significantly.

3 Voragine, *Legenda Aurea* I, 361. The full passage (in which Jacobus cites *Psalms* 29:4, as glossed in 1 *Corinthians* 15:12) reads: 'Sua resurrection est nostre resurrectionis causa efficiens, esemplaris et sacramentalis. De prima causa Glossa super Ps. "Ad vesperum demorabatur etc.": "resurrectio Christi est causa efficiens resurrectionis et anime in presenti et corporis in future"'.

makeup before us as much as possible, in an effort to show just how much the framework matters when the goal is the representation of knowledge incarnate. The framework is the medium that allows us to come to grips with imitation as the contingent practice that represents knowledge as a living thing.

Let me, therefore, begin again with the picture. Within a fictive field where simultaneity rules, and nothing appears necessarily or permanently prior to anything else, it is hard to know where to begin a description. One option would be to take a cue from the physical and dramatic hierarchies of the monument, both of which are centered, in the upper register, in the marble image of an Old Testament prophet, presumably Isaiah. This figure, which is positioned within a painted niche, performs the role of a prophet by presiding over two opening events. On one hand, he displays a banderole with a now fragmentary inscription predicting the Annunciation, thus pointing to the event pictured by Pisanello as the main element of the inner frame. On the other hand, the marble prophet is the crowning piece of the three-dimensional image of the Resurrection that emerges below him. While the painted image of the Annunciation organizes the framework, the main event is both notionally revealed (with the drawing back of the fictive curtains suspended from the prophet's platform) and physically manifested. It literally comes into relief, as if from the painted ground, and spills into the space of the church where it is supported by a foliate plinth.

I will insist, for a moment, that the Resurrection relief emerges from the framing fabric of Pisanello's painting rather than from the wall, as is more literally true, partly because the fiction demands it, for example, by showing the sculpted prophet standing in his painted niche. More crucially, however, I want to model a disposition that allows for the proper work of the fiction, its *ergon*, to manifest. To do so it is necessary to embrace the effects of the framework (or *parergon*) as evidence of the living agent that carries out the work and impels it forward. While it is arguably always useful to the enterprise of interpretation, a certain openness or susceptibility to the effects of fiction is indispensable to an attempt to characterize a type of imitative process that, like Pisanello's, insistently fails to get to the point and/or deliver up something either coherent—like an Albertian *istoria*—or fully external to that unsettling moment within the process of imitation when life and death are held in precarious and unresolved suspension.

Imitative Practice, Modern Art History, and Pisanello's Poetics

The fundamental incommensurability of Alberti's explanation of *istoria*—the painter's legitimate means of putting together and conveying meaning—and

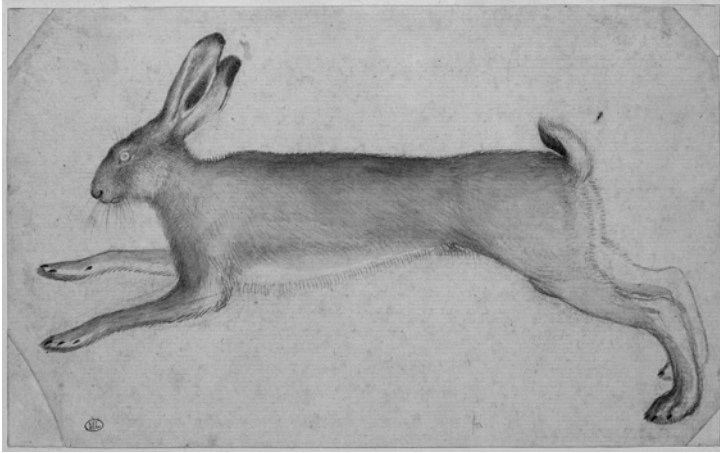


FIGURE 5.2 *Pisanello, Study of a Hare (c. 1440). Watercolor and black chalk on vellum, 13.9 × 22.5 cm. Paris, Louvre (Cabinet des dessins, INV 2445).*

IMAGE © RMN-GRAND PALAIS/ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK.

Pisanello's paintings is well-established. It is enough to refer to Michael Baxandall's observation that 'narrative decorum in Pisanello is a matter of some internal concinnity or harmonic connection between represented objects rather than single-minded reference of every represented object to one narrative end'.⁴ If, as Thomas Puttfarcken says of Italian Renaissance painting in the Albertian tradition: 'Figure composition remains the accepted "proper" task of the artist, his *opus justum*', then what should we do with a painter like Pisanello who shows us so much of the *parerga*—the sidework or background—that the main work of the painting, or the properly foregrounded subject of figural composition, is buried?⁵ In fact, it is more accurate to say that the ostensible main work and the *parerga* or are so thoroughly intertwined, even inverted, in Pisanello's work that it is impossible to say where one ends and the other begins.

Questions of composition and narrative decorum aside, the fundamental interpretative challenge to be faced in evaluating Pisanello's fictions has to do with prevailing expectations about historical process and the legitimate ends of imitative practice. A couple of images and a description of their respective places within a conventional history of style will stand here for a fuller argument. On one hand is Pisanello study of a running hare [Fig. 5.2], on the other,

4 Baxandall M., *Giotto and the Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition, 1350–1450* (Oxford: 1971) 96.

5 Puttfarcken T., *The Discovery of Pictorial Composition: Theories of Visual Order in Painting, 1400–1800* (New Haven – London: 2000) 110.



FIGURE 5.3 *Leonardo da Vinci, Study of Cats (c. 1515). Pen and ink, ink wash and black chalk on vellum 27 × 21 cm. Windsor, Royal Collection, Her Majesty Elizabeth II.*

IMAGE © ROYAL COLLECTION, HER MAJESTY
QUEEN ELIZABETH II.

Leonardo's study of cats [Fig. 5.3]. These two drawings are familiar waypoints in a progressive history of style, a history which is also a teleology of the post-Enlightenment condition of modernity. The familiar narrative, which says that Pisanello draws dead animals while Leonardo draws living ones, uses this comparison, or a similar one, as evidence of the scientific / humanistic progress of Renaissance art.

If this seems like a reasonable way of accounting for the evidence—which, if the goal of imitation is taken to be the articulation of a composed 'human' subject, it certainly does—it is also insufficient. Such an account utterly fails to describe, let alone to weigh, the effects of Pisanello's fiction. For all that

it retains traces of an encounter with a dead creature, there is something strangely un-dead about Pisanello's hare. The evidently dead body of a hare is not only described with great attention to surface detail, it also is arranged to make it run in a clearly fictive register. The resulting creature appears to be permanently suspended, as if by the lingering effect of the hand that made it, between life and death.

Nothing is to be gained by completely overturning the familiar narrative, but there are other ways of thinking about the relation between Pisanello's drawing and Leonardo's that find a better purchase on the often startling results of Pisanello's imitative practice. Beyond exemplifying successive moments in the history of style, the two drawings are also representative of two different ways of knowing, one that remains embedded within the practice of imitation, and one that resolves itself into something recognizable, like an external point of view on a living animal. If the model of understanding exemplified by Pisanello's work hasn't received much attention in the literature, it is not because it was ever fully superseded, certainly not in Leonardo's practice.

The problem of what to do with Pisanello's art arises from two interrelated issues: first, the impossibility of describing the evidence in any detached, coherent manner, and, second, the tenacity of modern 'scientific' models of history that insist that this is the historian's job. While there is no getting around the dilemma, the advantage we have in the aftermath of various kinds of deconstruction is that we can see the cracks in the edifice of a rigid historicism, among them the fundamental incompatibility of progressive models of modern historiography with the recursive patterns of sacred history and the unruly habits of imitation. There is, after all, nothing either progressive or scientific in the kind of imaginative leap that brings Pisanello's hare back to life and makes it run.

The difficulty in imagining a historical position capable of accomplishing such a feat did not stop Walter Benjamin from attempting something similar. In the posthumously published 1940 *Theses on the Philosophy of History*, Benjamin gives characteristically enigmatic, and overtly allegorical expression to his own procedure as a historian of thought. The allegory takes shape around the recollection of a famous fake automaton chess player, known as "The Turk".⁶ It proceeds as follows:

6 Benjamin could not have chosen less stable ground upon which to develop his explanation of historical materialism. The automaton known as "The Turk" was invented by Wolfgang von Kempelen in the late-eighteenth century and toured Europe and the United States of America in the first decades of the nineteenth century. It was known to Benjamin through the famous essay in which Edgar Allan Poe, who claimed to have seen

It is well-known that an automaton once existed, which was so constructed that it could counter any move of a chess-player with a counter-move, and thereby assure itself of victory in the match. A puppet in Turkish attire, water-pipe in mouth, sat before the chessboard, which rested on a broad table. Through a system of mirrors, the illusion was created that this table was transparent from all sides. In truth, a hunchbacked dwarf who was a master chess-player sat inside, controlling the hands of the puppet with strings. One can envision a corresponding object to this apparatus in philosophy. The puppet called 'historical materialism' is always supposed to win. It can do this with no further ado against any opponent, so long as it employs the services of theology, which as everyone knows is small and ugly and must be kept out of sight.⁷

A great deal has been said about Benjamin's allegory, most of which has to do with his circumstances in Europe during the second World War, and the critical breakdown, in that context, of the positive cultural values promoted by nineteenth-century humanism.⁸ Two aspects of his project are relevant here. The first and more general point is that Benjamin's confrontation, via images like "The Turk", with the various nineteenth-century historicist positions he identifies as untenable in a 'state of emergency' helps foreground the conceptual underpinnings and potential shortcomings of certain modern lines of thinking about the historian's task: the adherence to linear progressive models, the identification with discrete disciplines within the field of knowledge, and the unquestioned faith in the evidentiary value of facts.⁹ Needless to

the object when it was exhibited in Richmond, Virginia, exposed the automaton as a fake. As W.K. Wimsatt explains, Poe's exposition of the fraud, which is presented piece of careful detective work, is itself an elaborate and compelling work of fiction (Wimsatt W.K., "Poe and the Chess Automaton", in Budd E.J. – Cady E.H. (eds.) *On Poe: The Best from American Literature* (Durham NC: 1993) 78–91).

- 7 Benjamin W., "Über den Begriff der Geschichte", in Tiedemann R. – Schweppenhäuser H. (eds.), *Gesammelte Schriften*, 7 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: 1972) 1.2, 691–704, here 693.
- 8 See, for starters, Comay R., "Benjamin's Endgame", in Benjamin A. – Osborne P. (eds.), *Walter Benjamin's Philosophy: Destruction and Experience* (London – New York: 1994) 251–291.
- 9 See Vardoulakis D., "The Subject of History: The Temporality of Parataxis in Benjamin's Historiography", in Benjamin A. (ed.), *Walter Benjamin and History* (London – New York: 2005) 118–136, 243–244. Vardoulakis summarizes the main points of contention as follows: 'First, there is the teleological history, one that asserts that enlightened man will head towards a cosmopolitan ideal, as Kant argues, or one that poses freedom as an end whose attainment in the present would signal history's end, according to Hegel. Second, historicism also includes the attempts to identify independent historical disciplines, a history of art, a history

say, even when they have been tempered by deconstruction, all three of these tendencies are still clearly recognizable in the normal practices and default divisions of the various historical disciplines.

More than simply denying us the possibility of a complacent view of history's progress or an innocent view of the historian's task, however, Benjamin's example suggests other ways of confronting the past, and other ways of proceeding that do not entail a strict separation of theory and practice. As much as anything else, Benjamin's 'historical materialism' describes a paratactical procedure (along the lines of a Dadaist construction) that embraces imitative practice and its volatile effects as necessary—even vital—to the undertaking of the philosopher of history. As Christopher Wood explains in his account of the reception of the 'Strukturanalyse' of the Vienna School, and the generally eidetic models of apprehension proposed by Benjamin, the settling down of the normal patterns of historical research in the years during and after the Second World War entailed the formal rejection of these models. Voicing the positions of Meyer Shapiro and Ernst Gombrich, Wood summarizes the general verdict inherited by the main line of art history, namely, that 'the intuitive recognition of the world in a work of art was no way to do history'. He also notes that the assertion of an official position did not actually extinguish Benjamin's legacy in the historical disciplines. Speaking of an underlying but largely unarticulated current of 'quasi-mystical allegoresis', Wood acknowledges that 'much recent imaginative work in cultural history, perhaps especially in the Early Modern field, is animated by Benjamin's example and the faith in the explanatory power of the single, striking emblematic image or a historiographical montage of such images'.¹⁰ There are reasons, generally having to do with the materials we study and the general problem of knowing, why this should be so.

If building a philosophy of history on the illusory 'win' of a false automaton was a questionable gambit for a philosopher in the 1940s, building a framework for the experience of knowledge as a sacred presence is a different sort of proposition—one that necessarily involves a descent into fiction. Here is where Benjamin's philosophical commitments and Pisanello's poetics begin to find common ground. Indeed, the dubious prospect of intuitive, eidetic apprehension looks far more plausible when it is considered outside modern disciplinary norms in light of a medieval Christian poetics of the image—a poetics built

of politics, of economy of technology and so on. [...] Third, historicism finally includes the practice of adding up facts, while insisting in Rankeian fashion on the self-evidence of these facts—what Benjamin calls the "strongest narcotic of the century" (ibid. 122).

10 Wood C.S. (ed.), *The Vienna School Reader: Politics and Art Historical Method in the 1930s* (New York: 2000) 45–46.

on the idea of the incarnation of knowledge as both a substantial reality and an imminent presence in the fabric of creation. Moreover, Benjamin's technique, as exemplified in the figure of the automaton, is rooted in the age-old inventive practice of personification, or putting faces on absent or otherwise unfathomable things. Not surprisingly, his is not a conventional use of the technique. The twist, in this case, is that the face, the internal mechanism, and the operator are all laid open for inspection. Benjamin uses personification to make us think, not only about the divided subject of history, but also—in ways that will help us approach Pisanello's fictions—about the workings of personification.

The Workings of Personification

Although it is not always recognized in discussions that have been dominated by definitions of cult image versus art object, icon versus narrative, and so on, personification (or *prosopopoeia*) is a key term for study of late medieval and early modern devotional painting.¹¹ Not only does it capture the basically rhetorical character and function of the images of the Madonna and Child that were produced in great numbers from the late twelfth century onward, but its definition as a rhetorical procedure provides a means of getting at and describing, by dissection, the imaginative procedure that produced such images. As part of structured act of verbal praise, apostrophe—or the turning away and address that calls a distant or absent entity into the fictional realm of a face-to-face correspondence—and *prosopopoeia*, which lends that entity a face in the form of a responsive voice, work together to constitute an open framework to be fulfilled in an imagined conversation. The effect, as Patrick Diehl puts it in his wonderfully lucid study of the religious lyric as an *ars poetica*, is to annul 'not only the distances of history and geography' but also, and especially (in the case of religious lyric) 'the distance between sinful earth and high heaven'.¹² The result is a highly flexible field with a great deal of representational latitude. A sacred personage like the Virgin, once called into such a field by means of personification, is not strictly bound to a theological definition of her spotless character. Often she behaves less like the morally unassailable Virgin than she does like an earthly lady, even to the extent of misbehavior, as, for example, in

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- 11 I refer here to two influential works: Belting H., *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. E. Jephcott (Chicago – London: 1994); and Ringbom S., *Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-up in Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting* (Åbo: 1965; second revised edition, Doornspijk: 1984). The exception to the rule is, of course, Koerner J.L., *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: 1993) 3–61.
- 12 Diehl P.S., *The Medieval European Religious Lyric: An Ars Poetica* (Berkeley: 1985) 141.

a late fifteenth-century *rondeau* by the Benedictine monk Guillaume Alexis cited by Diehl. In this case the ersatz Virgin appears as a sharp-tongued braggart, delivering an auto-encomium.

Finally, and not least importantly, rhetorical processes like apostrophe and *prosopopoeia* also divide the praying subject in various ways, rendering that subject vulnerable and open to renewal. This makes them powerful tools in a devotional economy, but there are attendant risks. One of the risks, which is paradigmatically associated in the late medieval and early modern discourse on idolatry either with a picture or with the object status suggested by a pictorial artifact, is a result of confusion. The confusion arises when the view of the rhetorical structure is either forcefully collapsed or forgotten in favor of a perspective that sees a single, coherent ekphrastic moment. The fictional origins of such a 'picture' admit to being construed simultaneously as the outgoing prayer of a devotee / painter and the incoming missive from the sacred personage / painter, putting the maker of the picture in a special position as translator of divine knowledge. Petrarch famously described the latter position, and embraced the poetic implications of this kind of idolatry, in the pair of sonnets celebrating Simone Martini's portrait of Laura's heavenly beauty.¹³

Yet, if effective personification seems inevitably to produce idolatry, Pisanello's art suggests that this need not be the case. While his fictions are recalcitrant when it comes to clearly articulating their subjects, or delivering them up in any coherent way from the field of their making, this recalcitrance may yet be deemed evidence of a devotional style. It might even be considered as a functional impediment to the kind of idolatry that attends poetic fiction in the Petrarchan tradition. What emerges from Pisanello's process of pictorial description in the Brenzoni monument might be described as a complex personification, but it is not one that admits to a focused or objectifying encounter. If the subject is something having to do with the Virgin, that subject is only encountered as a moving target, presenting multiple aspects or faces, and incessantly escaping the boundaries. Beyond representing the Virgin, or even describing her beauty in an expanding and shifting act of pictorial praise, Pisanello conjures a figure and a field that confronts the viewer with a dizzying dynamics of focus and dispersion, attention and distraction, making and unmaking. The representation of the Annunciate Virgin is but one of many possible entry points [Fig. 5.4].

13 The Petrarchan tradition reached its apogee in the visual arts in the sixteenth century with the madonnas of Raphael and Parmigianino. See Cropper E., "On Beautiful Women, Parmigianino, Petrarchismo, and the Vernacular Style", *The Art Bulletin* 58 (1976) 374–394; and Stefaniak R., "Amazing Grace: Parmigianino's Vision of St. Jerome", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 58 (1995) 105–115.



FIGURE 5.4 *Pisanello, Annunciate Virgin. Detail of the Brenzoni Monument. Multimedia wall painting (completed 1426). San Fermo Maggiore, Verona.*

IMAGE © SCALA, FLORENCE/ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK.

To the inevitable objection that this is not an iconic portrayal of the Virgin, but a narrative one, I can only answer that trying to draw a line between the iconic and narrative functions of this figure is an exercise in futility. There is really no way to put this figure away as a necessary or conventional element of a given narrative pretext. In fact, Pisanello's style undoes the narrative in favor of a kind of description that goes so far beyond the requirements of its biblical



FIGURE 5.5 *Pisanello, Gabriel. Detail of the Brenzoni Monument. Multimedia wall painting (completed 1426). San Fermo Maggiore, Verona.*

IMAGE © SCALA, FLORENCE/ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK.

pretext as to fragment any narrative sense. Where we might expect to find a dramatic connection established between the figure of the Virgin and that of the Archangel Gabriel, Pisanello offers a paratactical arrangement of arresting moments, like the still-life composed around a decidedly non-communicative figure of Gabriel [Fig. 5.5]. His description of the Virgin is equally confusing. It not only renders a figure that is apparently absorbed in something other

than her prescribed narrative role, it also has no clear boundaries. In fact, the depiction of the Virgin expands beyond the red marble frame that divides the central event from its setting, filling up a second level of framework where it becomes a depiction of a *hortus conclusus*.

Moreover, Pisanello's Virgin's attention is divided in such a manner as to elicit a simultaneous telescoping and widening of focus in the encounter with the work. From the viewpoint of a relatively detached spectator standing before the Brenzoni monument in the nave of the Church of San Fermo, the Annunciate Virgin's attention appears to be directed toward something located at the place where we see the image of the Resurrection, even while the possibility of seeing the marble relief of the Resurrection is denied to her by the impediment of the opening curtain. If, on the other hand, we focus—as the painter clearly did, but as is now all but impossible to do—on the up-close view of the Virgin in her chamber, we find a figure who pays no attention whatsoever to the arrival of Gabriel and his momentous news. Mary's attention is directed instead toward a little dance performed by a troubadour and his lady. The dance is portrayed by Pisanello in the form of a fictive tapestry that drapes the *cassone* at her bedside. No wonder that she pays attention, for a little attention on our part pays off in the production of a quasi-magical effect whereby the underlying form of the *cassone*, which is made visible by the fictive tapestry, notionally produces the bend that makes the fictive bodies dance like tiny stringless marionettes. Meanwhile, a miniature organ player, whose figural contours precisely echo those of the Virgin's body, emerges from the drapery of the bed.

Sacred Event, Repercussions, and the Value of Creative Work

It is as if Pisanello is less interested in depicting the biblical narrative of the Annunciation than he is in rendering, as directly as possible, the persistent effects of the Incarnation. The iconographic aspect of this scenario is a forgone conclusion. The Annunciation is, after all, nothing other than the announcement of the coming of the son of God in the flesh. The simple naming of the event depicted, however, does little justice either to its ongoing significance, or to Pisanello's role as translator. Here, once again, the *Legenda Aurea* provides a useful countercontext for Pisanello's elaborate pictorial textile. Even a cursory reading of the section of the *Legenda Aurea* devoted to Annunciation Sunday reveals a concern that is common to the accounting of the major feast days of the Christian calendar. A substantial portion of the chapter devoted to the Annunciation is given over to the description of the ongoing effects of the

originating event. For his part, Jacobus represents those effects in a series of miracles. Often the miracles are presented as after-images or literal re-presentations of the original event. The most visually striking of the miracles that attend the account of the Annunciation is a case in point. In it Jacobus remembers the opening utterance of Gabriel (the Ave Maria) in a vivid series of images. He recounts the tale of an unlettered soldier who renounces the world and enters a monastery, where, despite the best efforts the teacher assigned to teach him to read, he learns nothing but the two words Ave Maria, which he constantly recites. The miracle manifests itself after his death, when a lily, inscribed in gold with the letters Ave Maria, sprouts from his tomb. In concluding the tale, Jacobus explains that the monks, duly impressed by this miracle, 'removed the earth covering his tomb and found that the roots sprang from the dead man's mouth'.¹⁴

While Pisanello arguably shares Jacobus' concern to depict the ongoing truth of the Incarnation, he does so far more directly in the framework for the Brenzoni monument. The evidence of the truth of the Incarnation is not provided by something separable from its manifestation in the fabric of his fiction. The figure of the organ player is telling in this regard [Fig. 5.6]. As much as the narrative content of the motif may be comprehended as part of the festive equipment appropriate to an image of the Annunciation, it is not so easily explained away. This little figure wavers in the space between the material / pictorial field (or *campo*) of the painting and the fictive field of the curtain. Not only is its own status profoundly liminal, but it calls into question the difference between figure and field. With contours that duplicate those of the Annunciate Virgin, the motif of the organ player reads as a pictorial echo, effectively dragging the foregrounded figure of the Virgin back into the fluctuating ground.

While such echoing elements certainly remind us, in Baxandall's words, that 'narrative decorum in Pisanello is a matter of some internal concinnity or harmonic connection between the objects represented', they do more than simply fill up the space of the picture. They also act as indices to the associative play that characterizes Pisanello's process of invention in a much larger field, including a remarkable folio of drawings now in the Louvre [Fig. 5.7]. Here a drawing of a squid and a scattering of flowers frame the rendering of a stockinged leg in such a way as to portray the workings of an imitative process wherein one form apparently produces the other and vice-versa. All this is to say that the real motive of Pisanello's work, its *ergon*, or the thing that impels the process of personification and informs his fictions like the beating pulse of

14 Voragine, *Legenda Aurea* I, 333.



FIGURE 5.6 *Annunciate Virgin and her entourage. Detail of the Brenzoni Monument. Multimedia wall painting (completed 1426). San Fermo Maggiore, Verona.*

IMAGE © SCALA, FLORENCE/ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK.

a man-made organ, is something other than a narrative incident, something beyond a singular artwork, and something more than a comprehensible locatable entity. It is the simultaneously overwhelming and informing mystery of incarnation.

Even if we cannot read the painters' mind or reconstruct his intention, the attempt to discern the movement of his instrument, and thereby the working of his *ingenium*, in the results of his imitative practice really matters. It is in that attempt that the inter-subjective field, the space within which knowledge is represented and experienced as absence, is opened. Faced with the question of what sort of historical spectator or response might be up to the task of engaging with Pisanello's fiction, and coordinating the positions I have attempted to describe, I can only sketch an answer, beginning with a passage in letter written by Leonello d'Este to his brother Meliaduse. In this letter, Leonello writes to



FIGURE 5.7 *Pisanello, Study of a Squid, a Leg, and Flowers (c. 1440). Watercolor, pen and ink, ink wash, chalk, and metalpoint on vellum, 24.4 × 18.5 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre (Cabinet des dessins, INV 2262, Recto).*

IMAGE © RMN-GRAND PALAIS/ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK.

Rome to ask his brother to act as his agent in acquiring a painting of the Virgin by the hand of Pisanello, who he names as the greatest painter of his time. Conveying a sense of urgency, Leonello declares: 'I am extraordinarily desirous of seeing that [painting] both for the *ingenium* of the excellent painter and, truly, for the Virgin's special praise'.¹⁵ Although the recognition of the painter's *ingenium* and the acknowledgment of the praise due to Virgin are not described as identical acts, they are explicitly linked in Leonello's expression of desire. It is precisely this sort of coordinated perspective that Pisanello's framework elicits. Perhaps it is worth suspending a certain kind of disbelief if it means that we can, if not actually reanimate Pisanello's creatures, then at least imagine a field where such an event could take place.

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15 Cordellier, "Documenti", doc. 24: 'Illam enim mirum in modum videre cupio tum excellenti pictoris ingenio tum vero precipua Virginis devotione'.

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The Triumph of Truth in an Age of Confessional Conflict

James Clifton

Prosopopoeia, the faining of a person, that is, whe[n] to a thing sencelesse and dumbe we faine a fit person, or attribute a person to a commonwelth or multitude: This figure Orators do use as wel as Poetes: the Orator by this figure maketh ye commonwealth to speake, to commend, to dispraise, to aske, to complaine, also life and death, vertue and pleasure, honesty and profite, wealth and poverty, envy and charity: to contend and plead one against another, and sometime he raiseth againe as it were the dead to life, and bringeth them forth complaining or witnessing what they knew. Sometime to Cities, townes, beastes, birdes, trees, stones, weapons, fire, water, lights of the firmament, and such like things he attributeth speech, reason, and affection, and to no other end then to further his purpose and to confirme and make his cause evident, as for example: If an orator having occasion to commend some vertue to his hearers, as truth or such like, he may after he hath sufficiently praised truth, faine it a person, and bring it in bitterly complaining how cruelly she is oppressed and how litle esteemed, how often outfaced, and how much abhorred, how many be her enemies, how few her frends, how she wandreth hither and thither without intertainment, and remaineth without habitation, he may faine her complaining against false ballances, weightes and measures, against false testimonies, lies and periurie, against wicked hipocrisie and cursed heresie, against feare, favour and avarice which are her enemies in the seats of iudgement conspiring against her and violently throwing her downe from thence, and cruelly treading her underfoote, also he may cause her to accuse flatterie and detraction, theft, violence, and fraude, and to make a most true and long complaint, as well against persons that be her enemies, as against vices which do oppose and oppresse her.

HENRY PEACHAM, *The Garden of Eloquence*, 1593¹

1 P[eacham] Henry, *The Garden of Eloquence, Containing the Most Excellent Ornaments, Exornations, Lightes, Flowers, and Formes of Speech, Commonly Called the Figures of Rhetorike* [...] (London, H. Jackson: 1593) 136–137. Peacham substantially changed his description of

To feign truth a person, to borrow Henry Peacham's terminology, Willem and Godevaard van Haecht, the *auctores intellectuales* and publishers of a print designed by Maarten de Vos and engraved by Johannes Wierix in 1579, chose a bare-breasted woman, who holds aloft a burning lamp (labeled, in reverse, 'LVX MVNDI') while looking down on a large volume inscribed with two Gospel texts, reading, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life' (*John* 14:6), and 'All power is given to me in heaven and in earth' (*Matthew* 28:18) [Fig. 6.1].² She sits, as the second person of the Trinity, on axis with the Tetragrammaton and the Dove of the Holy Spirit, and she is labeled in a glowing halo, 'CHRISTVS' (the only figure labeled within the image itself). Any possible ambiguity as to meaning was carefully excluded. In the *Triumphus Veritatis* (*Triumph of Truth*), as the print is inscribed, Christ as Truth is represented.

Over a half-century ago, Rudolf Berliner marvelled at the depiction of Christ as a woman in a German drawing from 1657.³ The draughtsman might well have known the Van Haecht / De Vos / Wierix engraving, in which Christ is also shown as a woman. Berliner was, however, less interested in the trans-gendering of Christ, which, in fact, was common enough in the Middle Ages as a devotional device,⁴ than he was in the freedom with which artists have approached devotional imagery, and he concentrated on the substitution of allegorical figures for Christ. As should become clear in what follows, his conclusion that 'God in female shape' would not appeal to Protestants because of 'even the slightest allusion to a mediating role of the Virgin' is not borne out by the *Triumphus Veritatis*.⁵ My intention here, likewise, is not to examine the engraving's Christological gender bending. Rather, I would like to explicate the iconography of the print in the context of the confessional and political

prosopopoeia from the first edition (1577) of *The Garden of Eloquence* to the second, and last, edition (1593), especially in the second part, where he introduced the discourse on truth.

- 2 Ruyven-Zeman Z. van – Leesberg M. (collab.); Van der Stock J. – Leesberg M. (eds.), *Hollstein's Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450–1700, The Wierix Family*, 10 vols. (Rotterdam: 2004) VIII, 191–192 (no. 1837), who explains that the print had previously been given to Hieronymus Wierix on the basis of the monogram *IE.W*, which is now understood to refer to Johannes (Iehan) (Ruyven-Zenan, *The Wierix Family*, "Guide to the Catalogue" xv), though it is worth noting that Johannes was in Delft in 1579, the date of the *Triumphus Veritatis* (ibid. xvi). On the print, see also Heusinger C. von, *Das gestochene Bild. Von der Zeichnung zum Kupferstich* [exh. cat., Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig] (Braunschweig: 1987) 17–20 (cat. nos. 1–2).
- 3 Berliner R., "God Is Love", *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 42 (1953) 9–26.
- 4 Bynum C.W., *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: 1982) 110–169, with further bibliography.
- 5 Berliner, "God Is Love" 26.

that truth, but truth proves to be as subjective as any other abstraction, and could be arrogated, as Peacham described, to no other end than to further the orator's purpose.

In the *Triumphus Veritatis*, Christ / Truth rests one foot on a dressed stone (the divine Word as a firm foundation) and the other on Falsehood ('Lueghen', 'Lugen', 'Mensonge', according to the tri-lingual marginal subscription),⁶ who is skeletal from the abdomen down, with a reptilian tail, holding a book in one hand and leaning on an orb, within which a battle rages. The hag threatening Truth from the middleground at right wears chainmail and partial armor, but she is, in fact, dressed much like Truth—bare-breasted, with a garment gathered between the breasts, and a cloak draped over the right shoulder—thus setting the two figures in binary opposition. She holds serpents and a scorpion in her upraised hands. She is implicitly identified in the inscription in the upper margin as Envy ('Invidia'), 'the beast of many heads, and the head itself of evils, [who] attacks truth with goads and horrible flail'. But in the inscription in the lower margin, she is Hypocrisy ('Dypocresije', 'Gleysuerey', 'L'hyprocrisie'). Behind Envy/Hypocrisy is a viper spawning further vipers, probably manifesting the 'black plague of hypocrisy and heresy' ('lues hec haereoseos, et hypocrisis atra') described in the upper inscription.

The French inscription in the lower margin assures the viewer that truth conquers both envy and falsehood. In fact, as the inscription on the banderole stretched between the Tetragrammaton and the Holy Spirit among a glory of cherubs assures the viewer, 'Truth conquers all' ('VERITAS VINCIT OMNIA').⁷ Whereas Peacham's Truth is besieged and even trodden underfoot by a host of foes, including several named or personified in the *Triumphus Veritatis*, Van Haecht's Truth is unruffled by threats and calmly triumphs. The discalced monk to the left of Truth represents opinion ('Opinie', 'Opinio', 'Opinion'), looking about himself with arrogance, as the subscription says, vainly placing his faith in human knowledge and refined sensibility. Rosary and prayer book pendant from his belt, he stands on large tomes, the topmost of which is labeled 'perverse opinion' ('perversa opinio'),⁸ raises a hand to shield his bespectacled eyes from the light of Truth, and turns away a useless lantern in his other hand.

6 For selected inscriptions from this print and the subsequent versions of it, see the Appendix.

7 3 *Esdras* 3:10–12: 'unus scripsit: fortius est vinum. alius scripsit: fortior est rex. tertius autem scripsit: fortiores sunt mulieres, super omnia autem vincit veritas'. The phrase is closest to 3 *Esdras* 3:12, although the citation is to 3 *Esdras* 4, in which the concept of truth's triumph is explained.

8 In De Vos's composition drawing in Braunschweig, the tomes carry a different label: 'DIVERSCHE OPINIE' (Heusinger, *Das gestochene Bild* 18).

The *Triumphus Veritatis* is one of a dozen or so allegorical prints engraved by one of the Wierix brothers and published by Willem van Haecht in Antwerp. In this instance, Willem van Haecht shares the credit for both conceiving and publishing the work—‘composuerunt’ and ‘excuderunt’—with his nephew, Godevaard van Haecht. The Van Haecht-Wierix association was apparently short-lived: all the dated engravings lie within the span 1577–1579. The assertion on a print that it had been ‘composed’ by the publisher(s) was extremely unusual—though often adopted by the Van Haechts—and the intellectual content of the *Triumphus Veritatis* is attributable to the Van Haechts, perhaps to Willem more than Godevaard as the more active of the two, although one must note that Godevaard’s career and work has gained less attention than Willem’s.

Willem van Haecht, born around 1527, was a cloth merchant, poet, and publisher.⁹ He was active in the most prominent Antwerp chamber of rhetoric, the *Violieren*, which comprised mostly artists, serving at times as *factor*.¹⁰ He arranged the famed Antwerp *Landjuweel* in 1561 and wrote three Apostle plays a few years later. He published the Psalms rendered in Dutch verse (in 1579, the year of the *Triumphus Veritatis*), and wrote poems and songs as well.¹¹

9 On Willem and Godevaard van Haecht, see Roey J. van, “Het Antwerpse geslacht van Haecht (Verhaecht). Tafereelmakers, schilders, kunsthandelaars”, in Onghena M.J. (ed.), *Miscellanea Jozef Duverger: Bijdragen tot de kunstgeschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 2 vols. (Gent: 1968) II, 216–229, esp. 219–220, 223–225; Bevers H., “Willem van Haecht composuit—Zu einem Aspekt der Antwerpener Stichproduktion um 1570”, in Mai E. – Schütz K. – Vlieghe H. (eds.), *Die Malerei Antwerpens—Gattungen, Meister, Wirkungen. Studien zur flämischen Kunst des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts. Internationales Kolloquium Wien 1993* (Cologne: 1994) 179–185; Melion W.S., “*Cordis circumcisio in spiritu*; Imitation and the Wounded Christ in Hendrick Goltzius’s *Circumcision of 1594*”, *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 52 (2001) 31–77, esp. 58, 66; Bleyerveld Y., “Van de tiran verlost: Het boekje *Tyrannorum praemia. Den loon der tyrannen* van Willem van Haecht (1578)”, *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 52 (2001) 127–153; and Bleyerveld Y., “Prints as a Perfect Means of Communication: Allegorical Prints with Moral and Religious Messages Invented by Willem van Haecht”, in Ramakers B. (ed.), *Understanding Art in Antwerp: Classicising the Popular, Popularising the Classic (1540–1580)*, Groningen Studies in Cultural Change XLV (Leuven: 2011) 93–107.

10 On the *Violieren*, see Gibson W.S., “Artists and *Rederijkers* in the Age of Bruegel”, *Art Bulletin* 63 (1981) 431, 444–446.

11 On the Antwerp *Landjuweel* and Van Haecht, see Vandommele J., *Als in een Spiegel. Vrede, kennis en gemeenschap op het Antwerpse Landjuweel van 1561*, Middeleeuwse studies en bronnen 132 (Hilversum: 2011); and several contributions in Ramakers B. (ed.), *Understanding Art in Antwerp: Classicising the Popular, Popularising the Classic (1540–1580)*, Groningen Studies in Cultural Change 45 (Leuven: 2011).

He published scores of prints, in series, pairs, or as single sheets, most of them allegorical.¹² It seems that he published prints for only a short period: all the dated sheets are from 1577 to 1580, a period that corresponds closely to his time of association with the Wierixes. He was Lutheran, Orangist, and anti-Spanish, and he left Antwerp, presumably for political reasons, from 1566 to 1570. The last notice of him dates from 1583; he would have left Antwerp again, for parts unknown, in 1585 or shortly thereafter, upon the recatholicization of the city, unless he had already died. Godevaard van Haecht is perhaps best known as a chronicler of the troubles in Antwerp and elsewhere between 1565 and 1574. He emigrated from Antwerp to Deutz at Keulen in 1589 (within Farnese's four-year amnesty period) and died there in 1599.¹³

The compositions that Willem—or Willem and Godevaard—conceived primarily concern religious, moral, and political issues of relevance to the situation in the Netherlands. Holm Bevers has divided them neatly into two groups, 'religiös-lehrhafte Allegorien' and 'politisch-historische Allegorien und Satiren',¹⁴ but some of the prints, the *Triumphus Veritatis* in particular, rest in the intersection of these two groups.

Truth and Its Enemies in the Reformation

In the *Triumphus Veritatis*, Truth is not specifically defined except insofar as it is equated with Christ. It is similarly aligned with Christian tradition—without confessional specificity—in an engraving conceived and published by Willem van Haecht the previous year, 1578. In the *Excitatio hominis* (*Raising Up of Man*) [Fig. 6.2], attributable to Hieronymus Wierix, after Ambrosius Francken, Grace ('Gratia') helps Man ('Homo') to rise. He looks up to his right, where Knowledge of God ('Cognitio Dei') holds toward him the Mirror of the Law ('Speculum legis') and points toward the three theological virtues and the dove of the Holy Spirit. On Knowledge of God's head is a lamp, the Light of Truth ('*Lumen veritatis*'), cast here in less pointedly Christological terms.¹⁵

12 Bleyerveld counts sixty ("Van de tiran verlost" 150 n. 11 and "Prints as a Perfect Means" 94 n. 4); the names of Willem and Godevaard appear jointly as composer and/or publisher on eight prints (Bleyerveld, "Prints as a Perfect Means" 96 n. 10).

13 Roey, "Het Antwerpse geslacht van Haecht" 219.

14 Bevers, "Willem van Haecht composuit" 179–180, followed by Bleyerveld, "Van de tiran verlost" 129 and "Prints as a Perfect Means" 94.

15 Ruyven-Zeman, *The Wierix Family* VIII, 138, 141 (no. 1799). In the upper left of the image, opposite the celestial group (which is labeled *Dona spiritus*) is a building labeled



FIGURE 6.2 Attributed to Hieronymus Wierix after Ambrosius Francken, *Excitatio hominis* (1578). Engraving, 269 × 344 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1906-185.

The inscription in the lower margin of the *Triumphus Veritatis* alludes to the stone on which Christ/Truth rests her foot, asserting that Truth holds God's word as a firm foundation, as cornerstone. The cornerstone is, of course, traditionally associated with Christ (thus in the *Triumphus Veritatis*, Christ as Truth rests her foot on Christ as Word), and as such is labeled in *Excitatio hominis* ('Χρς'). Christ appears again in another Van Haecht engraving as the stone, clearly labeled, crushing Sin (as the tempting serpent) and Death, surmounted by an open book, which is held by symbols of the Evangelists and displays scripture in his voice [Fig. 6.3].¹⁶ The print, contrasting Obedience

Domus tenebrarum, which features female nudes in the upper story and scenes of violence at the ground level. The *Domus tenebrarum* is a reduced version of two prints in the same series (ibid. 137, 139–140 [nos. 1797–1798]), both of which are signed by Hieronymus Wierix. On the series, see Bleyerveld Y., "Redding door Gods Genaede. De samenstelling van een prentenserie van Willem van Haecht (1578)", *Kunstlicht* 23 (2002) 20–25.

16 See also the stone labeled as Christ in the *Allegory on the Spanish Fury*, created by Willem van Haecht, engraved by Hans Collaert I after a design by Crispijn van der



FIGURE 6.3 *Wierix family (?) after Ambrosius Francken, Disobedience and Obedience (1579). Engraving, 205 × 266 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1906-1824.*

and Disobedience, is from a set of allegories on virtues and vices, which Van Haecht published in 1579 and which were engraved after Ambrosius Francken, possibly by one of the Wierixes.¹⁷ As in the *Triumphus Veritatis*, Christ is represented on axis with God the Father and the Dove of the Holy Spirit. One of the scriptures here is *John* 8:12, the ‘ego sum lux mundi’ that also appears on the lamp in the *Triumphus Veritatis*. In both engravings, but especially in the *Triumphus Veritatis*, Van Haecht shows no reluctance to make metaphorical substitutions for the figure of Christ. He is heavily imbricated as the Way, the Truth, the Light of the World, woman, stone, and Word of God.

Broeck, and published by Adriaen Huybrechts in 1577 (Clifton J., “Adriaen Huybrechts, the Wierix Brothers, and Confessional Politics in the Netherlands”, in Jong J. de – Meadow M. – Ramakers B. – Scholten F. (eds.), *Printwerk / Print Work 1500–1700, Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 52 [Zwolle: 2001] 108–109; and Horst D.R., *De Opstand in zwart-wit. Propagandaprenten uit de Nederlandse Opstand (1566–1584)* [Zutphen: 2003] 178–179).

17 Ruyven-Zeman, *The Wierix Family* VIII, 114, 118 (no. 1783). On the series, see Bevers, “Willem van Haecht composuit” 180.



FIGURE 6.4 Antonius II Wierix after Marten van Cleve, *The World Turned Upside-Down* (*De verkeerde Weerelt*) (1579). Engraving, 207 × 322 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-76.885.

In the *Disobedience and Obedience*, the cornerstone crushes Sin—the deceptive serpent of the Garden—and skeletal Death, a common iconographic motif. Those two figures are combined in the Falsehood of *Triumphus Veritatis*, which is symbolically dominated by, that is, under the foot of, Christ/Truth. Looking away from Truth, Falsehood holds up a book inscribed with the greatest of lies, the serpent's to Eve: 'You shall not die; you shall be as gods' (from *Genesis* 3:4–5). As the inscription in the lower margin proclaims, Falsehood is also Death, as Truth is Life ('*De Lueghen is de Doot, ende de Waerheijt Dleuen*'). The death Falsehood brings may be military, as evinced in the orb under his arm, and must perforce refer to the warfare that ravaged the Netherlands. Van Haecht used the overturned terrestrial orb to similar effect in another print of 1579, engraved by Antonius II Wierix after Marten van Cleve, which is labeled as *The World Turned Upside-Down* (*De verkeerde Weerelt*) [Fig. 6.4].¹⁸ A soldier,

18 Ruyven-Zeman, *The Wierix Family* 1X, 46, 48 (no. 1921). On this print and the series to which it belongs, see Janson C., "The Animal Fable: Prints and Popular Culture in the Dutch Revolt", in Hermans T. – Salverda R. (eds.), *From Revolt to Riches: Culture and History of the Low Countries 1500–1700: International and Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (London: 1993) 93–108; Bevers, "Willem van Haecht composuit" 180; and Horst, *De Opstand* 277–279.

identified in the inscription as Tyranny (and thus as Spain),¹⁹ helps bind the world in this position while in the background two cities fire upon each other across a river. It is in such compositions that Van Haecht blurs the lines between religion and politics.

The figures and motifs in *The World Turned Upside-Down* function as a rebus, reiterated by the inscription (in three languages) below: 'Hypocrisy, with Tyranny, holds the world upside-down; Faith, and Love sleeps, so Time teaches us'. Like her counterpart in *Triumphus Veritatis*, Hypocrisy ('Gheneijstheijf' or 'Lÿpocrité') is a semi-naked hag, wearing a chainmail skirt, snakes held up in one hand.

The hag makes another appearance in Van Haecht's oeuvre, in a pairing of Envy and Charity [Fig. 6.5], from the series of virtues and vices that also includes the *Disobedience and Obedience* [Fig. 6.3].²⁰ The hag, who now has snakes for hair and sits on a wolf, is called Envy ('Invidia', 'Nijdt', 'l'Envie', and, curiously, 'Haß'). According to the inscription, 'Envy incites discord and strife but wounds herself most' ('Nijdt vuueckt Tuuist en Strijet, maer Quetsts haer seluen Meest'). This figure returns us to the *Triumphus Veritatis* [Fig. 6.1], whose hag is thus confirmed as both Hypocrisy and Envy.²¹ The hag of the *Triumphus Veritatis* may originally have been intended to be likewise Medusa-headed, which would put it more in keeping with the 'beast of many heads' of the upper inscription.²²

Hypocrisy holds a rosary in *The World Turned Upside-Down*, a mark of Roman Catholicism that is obviously borne by the monk in the *Triumphus Veritatis*.²³

The hand on Time's clock points to [15]79, and the date on the orb might be read as either 1579 (with an upside-down last digit, perhaps in keeping with the print's theme) or 1576 (with a reversed last digit, perhaps in reference to the sack of Antwerp, as suggested by Janson, "The Animal Fable" 94).

- 19 The print can thus be related to Willem van Haecht's series of prints, *Tyrannorum praemia. Den loon der tyrannen* (1578), on which see Bleyerveld, "Van de tiran verlost" (without, however, reference to *The World Turned Upside-Down*).
- 20 Ruyven-Zeman, *The Wierix Family* VIII, 113, 117 (no. 1781); Charity also appears, sleeping, in *The World Turned Upside-Down* [Fig. 6.4].
- 21 Adriaen Hubertus labeled the hag in *The World Turned Upside-Down* as Envy (*Nijt*) when he republished the print at an unknown date (impression in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-2004-896).
- 22 Bevers, "Willem van Haecht composuit" 180, has pointed out that Van Haecht's prints consist of imagery realizing the inscriptions rather than of inscriptions added, *ex post facto*, to existing compositions, as was more usual.
- 23 On the rosary as an anti-Catholic motif, see Horst, *De Opstand in zwart-wit* 277. The combination of the hag's chainmail, sword, and rosary in *The World Turned Upside-Down*



FIGURE 6.5 *Wierix family (?) after Ambrosius Francken, Envy and Charity (1579). Engraving, 192 × 259 mm. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen, BdH 26189 (PK).*

The description in the lower margin reminds us that one trusts opinion in vain. The stacked volumes on which the personification stands offer him precarious support, in contrast to the firm foundation of Truth's cornerstone. The monk bears some resemblance, at least conceptually, to the figure of Disobedience who is cast as a Jew, prayerbook at his belt and book of the Law under his arm, turning away from Christ [Fig. 6.3].

Although they pale by comparison to the anti-Catholic and anti-papal invective that can be found in some of the writings and images in the first decades of the revolt, the *Triumphus Veritatis* and *The World Turned Upside-Down* are, by virtue of the presence of the rosary in negative contexts, Van Haecht's most anti-Catholic works. His religious prints are generally devoid of

may have suggested the Catholic Walloon Malcontents, who were also called 'paternoster men' etc. (Pollmann J., *Catholic Identity and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1520–1635* [Oxford: 2011] 114; and Negri L., "The Origin of 'Malcontent'", *Notes and Queries* 59 [2012] 37–40, esp. 38–39).

specifically confessional symbols or markers. Their absence may be explained by Van Haecht's Lutheran theology, which is relatively unconcerned by adiaphora such as sacramentals, his aversion to strident confessional polemics, or confessional dissimulation. Van Haecht was not reluctant, however, to make use of traditional iconography, with or without minor changes, in positive contexts. In a *Homo moriens*, for example, Faith holds a chalice containing a cross, a small adjustment from the conventional Eucharistic image of the chalice and host,²⁴ and the background of a composition from 1579 includes the conventional late-medieval motif of the Agnus Dei bleeding into the Fons pietatis.²⁵

It is difficult to know with precision what occasioned Van Haecht's show of mild anti-Catholicism in the *Triumphus Veritatis* and *The World Turned Upside-Down*. In the summer of 1578, William of Orange declared his so-called 'Religious Peace', which allowed Protestants to worship freely. But the pendulum swung far: eventually, in May 1579, William had to protect the Catholics of Antwerp against rioting Protestants. Also at that time, in the early summer of 1579, representatives of Antwerp and other southern towns, along with William, signed the Union of Utrecht, aligning themselves with the northern, anti-Catholic revolt. The rosaries adorning Opinion and Hypocrisy may be the Van Haechts' small contribution to the anti-Catholicism of the moment, a moment that would last, at least for public expression, only until the Spanish reconquest of Antwerp in 1585.

An Iconography Turned Upside-Down

Although the Roman church readily condemned Luther and his followers as heretics, one Christian's orthodoxy is another's heresy, and Reformers just as readily decried heresies, beginning with the Roman church—Luther referred to pontifical law as 'that swamp of heresies' ('lernam illam haeresium') already in 1520²⁶—and extending to various sects within the reform movement. It is not surprising, then, that the Van Haechts could include heresy in the phalanx

24 Ruyven-Zeman, *The Wierix Family* VIII, 206–207 (no. 1847), conceived and published by Willem and Godevaard van Haecht, engraved by Hieronymus Wierix after Ambrosius Francken, undated.

25 Ibid. 115, 119 (no. 1785).

26 Letter of 10 July 1520 to Georg Spalatin: 'Ego vicissim, nisi ignem habere nequeam, damnabo, publiceque concremabo jus pontificium totum, id est, lernam illam haeresium' (Wette W.M.L. de, *Dr. Martin Luthers Briefe, Sendschreiben und Bedenken* [Berlin: 1825] vol. 1, 466).

of Truth's enemies. Nor is it surprising that the minimal reference to heresy in the Wierix engraving could be extrapolated and recast as anti-Reform polemic in two later copies of the composition.

A close copy of the *Triumphus Veritatis* was made by the monogrammist C.R. in 1581, that is, two years after the original engraving [Fig. 6.6]. The texts of the superscription and the inscriptions within the image were retained, as was the subscribed text in French, but the Dutch and German texts in the lower margin were replaced with new texts in Italian and Spanish, of somewhat different content. In the Italian inscription, Envy, master of every error, is described as a wild beast, kicking, hitting, and shaming truth and the eternal divine works. The hypocritical mask hopes to cover the just, the holy, and the pious that adorns truth, and forms an impious cohort with heresy, a fierce poison, stench, and black plague on the good, evoking the 'black plague of hypocrisy and heresy' ('lues hec haereseos, et hypocrisis atra') in the upper inscription. In the Spanish inscription, Truth speaks in the first person, asserting that her faith and her hope do not admit error and accusing her unspecified antagonist of tricking the simple.

The print is dedicated to Giovanni de' Medici, called Don Giovanni (1567–1621), the illegitimate (but legitimized) son of Cosimo I de' Medici, the grand duke of Tuscany, and Eleonora degli Albizzi. Giovanni had a distinguished career as a soldier, diplomat, and architect, and even though he was only thirteen or fourteen years of age when the print was made, he was already involved in international politics.²⁷ In the negotiations that resulted in Francesco's providing both money and troops for King Philip II's war against the rebels in the Low Countries, Giovanni had been nominally accepted into the service of the Spanish king, who named another of Giovanni's half-brothers, Don Pietro de' Medici, general of the Italian infantry.²⁸ The Medici court's enthusiasm for supporting Catholic causes and fighting heresy had already been suggested in Baccio Baldini's oration on the occasion of Cosimo I's death in 1574; Baldini cited Cosimo's 'oberservance of the commandments of the Holy Roman Church and the continuous persecution that he always carried out against the new heretics and her [the Church's] enemies', providing money and

27 By age twelve, he had completed his first diplomatic assignment, sent to the Venetian Republic to confirm publicly the secret marriage of his *fratello naturale*, Grand Duke Francesco I, to the Venetian Bianca Cappello. See Galluzzi R., *Storia del Granducato di Toscana*, vol. IV (Livorno: 1821; rev. ed., Florence: 1841–1843) 94–95; and Dooley B., *A Mattress Maker's Daughter: The Renaissance Romance of Don Giovanni de' Medici and Livia Vernazza* (Cambridge, MA – London: 2014) 25–26.

28 Galluzzi, *Storia del Granducato di Toscana* IV, 89–90.



FIGURE 6.6 Monogrammist C.R. after Maarten de Vos, Triumph of Truth (1581). Engraving, 442 × 326 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1890-A-15262.

troops to the Holy Roman Emperor and the king of France for that purpose.²⁹ Baldini was Giovanni's tutor, and it is possible that the print was intended to play a role in the young Medici's education.³⁰

The Catholic perspective in C.R.'s print of 1581, largely implied by its Medici context, is clarified in a copy, in reverse, of the *Triumphus Veritatis*, which appeared in 1593 [Fig. 6.7]. In this engraving, the figures, their accessories, and their relation to each other remain the same, and all the inscriptions within the image are retained, but, crucially, a few inscriptions to figures have been added, and the marginal inscriptions have been replaced. No engraver is named on the print, and the publisher is identified simply as 'Sadeler', which could place the publication in Antwerp with Aegedius I, in Cologne with Raphael (who was Godevaard van Haecht's brother-in-law from 1591), or in Munich with Jan or Aegedius II.³¹ All three were Catholic cities in 1593, although the print, with its monolingual inscription in Latin, was appropriate for international distribution.

Two inscriptions have been added to the figure of the monk. He is now labeled 'Catholica Obedie[n]tia', and a ray of light issues from his lamp—in fact, nonsensically so, since it comes through a presumably opaque side panel rather than the glazed front, which he still holds away from Christ/Truth—a ray that is inscribed with *Psalm* 118:105: 'Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my paths'. This verse echoes the scriptural text implied by the 'lux mundi' on Christ/Truth's lamp, *John* 8:12: 'Jesus spoke to them, saying: I am the light of the world: he that followeth me, walketh not in darkness, but shall have

29 Baldini B., *Orazione fatta nella Accademia Fiorentina, in lode del Serenissimo Sig. Cosimo Medici Gran Duca di Toscana, Gloriosa Memoria* (Florence, Bartolomeo Sermartelli: 1574) n.p.: 'Il zelo che egli hebbe sempre della Religione dimostrano manifestamente i molti benefizii, & grandi fatti da lui à tanti luoghi pii: la Religione de' Cauallieri di Santo Stefano da lui di nuouo ordinata co[n] tanti priuilegii, honori, & esenzioni, & dotata di tante ricchezze: l'osseruanza de i comandamenti della Santa Chiesa Romana: & la persecuzione continoua, che egli fece sempre mai à i nuoui heretici, & nemici di quella: Per che egli mandò à Carlo v. mentre che egli faceua loro guerra in Alemagna aiuto di danari, & di buon' numero di cauagli: Et poco di poi essendo da questi medesimi heretici perturbato tutto'l Regno di Francia, aiutò quel Rè di danari & di non picciol' numero di valorosa gente à piede & à cauallo, per poter sostenere la guerra, che quegli heretici gli faceuano: la quale egli hauendo con la sua prudenza molto tempo innanzi preueduta, haueua manifestata à quel Re, & consigliato lui'.

30 On Baldini, see Dooley, *A Mattress Maker's Daughter* 19.

31 I am grateful to Dorothy Limouze for this point. For the relationship between Godevaard van Haecht and Raphael Sadeler, see Roey, "Het Antwerpse geslacht van Haecht" 219; and Heusinger, *Das gestochene Bild* 17.



FIGURE 6.7 Unknown engraver after Maarten de Vos, *Triumph of Truth* (1593). Engraving, 243 × 197 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1966-15.

the light of life'. Thus, the monk is no longer in opposition to the central figure, but now duplicates her message. Some ambiguity might have been maintained in simply naming the figure 'Catholic obedience', but, with the addition of the verse from Psalms and the new text in the lower margin, the monk must be seen now in a positive light. The new inscription tells us: 'Yet religious faith stands and by strong foot presses strewn volumes' ('Stat tame[n], et forti pede strata

uolumina pressat / Relligiosa fides'). Thus, the monk is no longer precariously supported by the volumes of perverse opinion; rather, he tramples on them, as Truth symbolically tramples on Falsehood. 'Catholica Obedientia' cannot be understood as blind obedience to the Roman church, which, according to the Van Haechts' original conception, would itself embody false opinion, but should be read in this new context as the proper obedience of the Catholic—to Christ the Word and Truth as well as to the Church. In terms of Van Haecht's *Disobedience and Obedience* [Fig. 6.3], the monk has switched teams.

In the new inscription in the lower margin, Envy/Hypocrisy is called an Erynys, an ancient Greek spirit of vengeance. Within the image itself she is now labeled 'Rebellion' ('Rebellio') and stands in opposition to Catholic Obedience. The strife with which this figure was associated in the inscription to the Van Haecht print is now implicitly attributed to Protestant, anti-Spanish insurgents. The marginal subscription refers to the serpent as the 'Lernean plague', in reference to the Hydra, the multi-headed snake that sprouted new heads when any were severed, and to its progeny as heretics.³² The viper spawning other vipers in the background is for the first time labeled clearly as 'various heretics' ('varij heretici'). This motif derives from the *Hieroglyphica* of Horapollo, which claims that vipers are not born, but eat their way out of the belly of their mother, and offers it as a symbol of children who hate their mother.³³ It was adapted to emblematic purposes in the sixteenth century; Guillaume de La Perrière, for example, used it in his *Morosophie* (1553) to assert that one who talks too much is preparing to die while giving life to capricious talk.³⁴ It

32 Luther implicitly adduced the Hydra by referring to pontifical law as 'lernam illam haeresium' (above, n. 26). The Hydra is as flexible as any other allegorical figure; it is equated with Spain in the play, "Auriacus sive Libertas saucia", by Daniël Heinsius (1602), and, implicitly, in the engraving of Hercules in Willem van Haecht's pamphlet, *Tyrannorum praemia. Den loon der tyrannen* (1578); see Bleyerveld, "Van de tiran verlost" 143.

33 Boas G. (trans.), *The Hieroglyphics of Horapollo*, Bollingen Series 23 (New York: 1950) 98 (11.60).

34 La Perrière Guillaume de, *La Morosophie* (Lyon, Macé Bonhomme: 1553) fols. K5v–K6r (no. 65): 'TETRASTICHON. / Rumpitur ingratos pariendo Vipera foetus, / Prolis & ad vitam suscipit illa necem: / Pectoris arcanum dum profert garrula lingua, / Dat vitam verbis, interitumque sibi. / QVATRIN. Quand le serpent de la Vipere sort, / La mere meurt, & il vit par son aage: / Qui parle trop se prepare à la mort, / Et donne vie à son parler volage'. See also Gueroult Guillaume, *Le premier livre des emblemes* (Lyons, Balthazar Arnoullet: 1550) 28–30, who combines it with the myth that the female viper kills the male after mating with it to argue that 'the bad deed returns to its master' ('Le malfait retourne à son maistre'); the two motifs are combined to similar purpose in Mercier Jean, *Emblemata* (Bourges, s.n.: 1592) fols. 31v–32r (no. 27). See Saunders A., *The Sixteenth-Century French*

is associated with the self-destructive aspect of Envy eating her own heart in the Van Haecht composition of *Envy and Charity* of 1579 [Fig. 6.5], and it probably carried the same connotation in the *Triumph of Truth* of the previous year [Fig. 6.1], although there it appears in a confessional context. The Calvinist Theodore de Bèze, who may have been aware of the Van Haechts' work, inflected it more explicitly toward an ecclesiological meaning in his *Icones* of 1580 (repeated in his 1581 French edition): like the mother viper, the Church is eaten by the many that she nourished, but, unlike the viper, the Church remains while her offspring—called 'Apostats' in the French text—are destroyed.³⁵ The Sadeler print offers a less nuanced connotation with its spawn of heretical vipers born in pain.³⁶

Less sectarian than the Van Haecht *Triumphus Veritatis* and its large copies is a reduced variant, engraved by Antonius II Wierix and published by Hieronymus Wierix, unfortunately without indication of date, but prior to the engraver's death in 1604 [Fig. 6.8]. The central figure is no longer cast as Christ but is simply Truth, implied by the new marginal inscription. But the texts in her book and in that of the defeated figure below her are no longer references to truth, but to peace. The demon's inscription cites a passage about false prophets in *Ezechiel* 13:10: 'Because they have deceived my people, saying: Peace, and there is no peace'. To this, Truth responds with *Isaiah* 48:22:

Emblem Book: A Decorative and Useful Genre, Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance 224 (Geneva: 1988) 76, 240; and eadem, *The Seventeenth-Century French Emblem: A Study in Diversity* (Geneva: 2000) 39–40.

35 Bèze Théodore de, *Icones, id est verae imaginis virorum doctrina simul et pietate illustrum* [...] quibus adiectae sunt nonnullae picturae quas Emblemata vocant (Geneva, Jean de Laon: 1580) fol. Oo.iiir (no. xxxii): 'Viperei exedunt ceu matris viscera foetus, / Sic quos ipsa suo fouit alumna sinu, / Roditur heu! nimium sanctorum Ecclesia multis, / At non eventu nec ratione pari. / Vipera nam salua infelix prole interit, illis / Haec contra extinctis non peritura manet'; Bèze Théodore de, *Les vrais portraits des hommes illustres en piete et doctrine*, [...] plvs, quarantequatre Emblemes Chrestiens (Geneva, Jean de Laon: 1581) 272 (no. xxxii): 'Comme les vipereaux vont rongean les entrailles / De la vipere, afin de viure par sa mort: / Ainsi l'Eglise, hélas! est ruinée à tort, / Par des nourrissons siens, execrables canailles. / Mais l'issuë & le fait différent en ce point, / Que la vipere meurt donnant aux siens la vie: / Et l'Eglise subsiste & ne decline point, / Tandis qu'aux Apostats vie & grace est rauie'. See Saunders, *The Sixteenth-Century French Emblem Book* 239–240. The particular form of the motif in the Van Haecht compositions is close to that in La Perrière's *Morosophie* (but not Gueroult's *Le premier livre des emblemes*) and, subsequently, in De Bèze's *Icones*.

36 The motif was used by a lay Catholic, Arnoldus Buchelius in Utrecht in the 1590s, to describe wealth's devouring of its mother, piety, in the context of the rise of heresy (Pollmann, *Catholic Identity* 58–59).



FIGURE 6.8 Antonius H Wierix, Triumph of Truth. Engraving, 95 × 64 mm. London, The British Museum, 1859,0709.3190.

‘There is no peace to the wicked, saith the Lord’. The composition is now stripped of its reference to the Roman Church. The monk has become a lay ‘grayhead’, whose opinion, according to the inscription, cannot withstand the True. Still perched precariously on his pile of books, he no longer shields his eyes from the light of truth, but holds his glasses up in a vain attempt at understanding. The references to peace (and the lack thereof) still anchor the image in the Netherlandish troubles but without taking sides, intentionally allowing the viewer to align himself or herself with Truth against opinion and the impious, regardless of his or her religio-political affiliation.

The composition reappeared, also in much simplified form, as part of Jacob de Zetter’s tri-lingual *Kosmographia Iconica Moralis*, published in Frankfurt in 1614 by Johan Theodore de Bry, in cooperation with the Amsterdam publisher Hendrick Laurensz [Fig. 6.9]. Like De Bry, the emblematiser, engraver, and publisher De Zetter was a Calvinist active in the Netherlandish immigrant community in Frankfurt.³⁷ The *Kosmographia* comprises, as the title page announces, a hundred inventions engraved by the most ingenious masters of the century—including several Van Haecht compositions—for the purpose of representing and improving human mores.³⁸ In the engraving, the central figure is no longer identified explicitly as Truth, nor as Christ. She sits below the Dove of the Holy Spirit, as Christ would, but God the Father is no longer present, even as the Tetragrammaton. Her open book again quotes *John* 14:6, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life’, echoed in a new subscription, the Latin of

37 On De Zetter, see Groesen M. van, *The Representations of the Overseas World in the De Bry Collection of Voyages (1590–1634)*, Library of the Written Word 2; The Handpress World 2 (Leiden – Boston: 2008) 98; and Both B. – Stronks E., “Acceptatie van het vreemde. Pers- en geloofsvrijheid in de Republiek vanuit internationaal perspectief”, *Nederlandse Letterkunde* 15 (2010) 73–102, esp. 80–84. The *Kosmographia* has garnered little attention thus far; see Adams A. – Rawles S. – Saunders A., *A Bibliography of French Emblem Books of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, 2 vols. (Geneva: 1999–2002) II 639–640; Groesen, *Representations of the Overseas World* 447. On the multiple languages of De Bry publications, including the *Kosmographia*, see Groesen M. van, “Entrepreneurs of Translation: Latin and the Vernacular in the Editorial Strategy of the De Bry Publishing House”, in Cook H.J. – Dupré S. (eds.), *Translating Knowledge in the Early Modern Low Countries*, Low Countries Studies on the Circulation of Natural Knowledge 3 (Zurich – Berlin: 2012) 107–128, esp. 109.

38 Zetter J. de, *Kosmographia Iconica Moralis* [...] / *Povrtraict de la Cosmographie Morale* [...] / *New Kynstliche Weltbeschreibvng* [...] (Frankfurt, Apud Ioh: Theodorum de Bry: 1614). Among the Van Haecht inventions in the *Kosmographia* are the *Allegory on the Spanish Fury* (see above, n. 16), *The World Turned Upside-Down* [Fig. 6.4], and the series of virtues and vices that includes *Disobedience and Obedience* [Fig. 6.3] and *Envy and Charity* [Fig. 6.5].



FIGURE 6.9 Unknown engraver, *Triumph of Truth*. Engraving. Jacob de Zetter, *Kosmographia Iconica Moralis* (Frankfurt, Johan Theodor de Bry: 1614).

which asserts that the light of the Gospel shines throughout the world, offering hope, the way, life, and salvation. The precariously perched graybeard is once again a monk, probably meant to evoke the negative connotations of the Roman church evident in the original Van Haecht composition, but neither the print nor the *Kosmographia* as a whole is strongly confessional. The hag is again called Erynys—a designation presumably taken directly from the Sadeler engraving of 1593, where it first appeared—as well as the mother of errors, a softening of the designation from Sadeler's 'heretics'.

When 'a thing sencelesse and dumbe', to use Peacham's phrase, is given a voice, that voice does not inhere in the thing, and another voice can be easily substituted. Soon after the production of the *Triumphus Veritatis*, Willem van Haecht had ceased publishing and had then presumably been exiled for political and religious reasons. But his image of Christian Truth was both compelling enough and malleable enough to invite reuse. Offering an armature on which to hang varying—even conflicting—meanings, it was altered, pruned,

and reinscribed several times in the following decades. Truth was a virtue to commend, to cite Peacham's example again, but a virtue of shifting connotations for shifting audiences.

Appendix: Selected Inscriptions

Johannes Wierix after Maarten de Vos, *Triumphus Veritatis* (1579) [Fig. 6.1]

Above image: *TRIVMPHVS VERITATIS / IMPVGNAT VERVM STIMVLIS DIROQ[VE] FLAGELLO / BELLVA MVLTORVM CAPITV[M], ET CAPVT IPSA MALORVM / INVIDIA, OBTRACTANS FACTA INIMORTALIA DIVVM: / DVM: IVS, FASQ[VE] NEFAS FALSO PRAETEXITUR ORE, / ATQ[VE] LVES HEC HAERESEOS, ET HYPOCRISIS ATRA / NIL INTENTATVM, VETITI NIL VSQ[VE] RELINQVUNT.*

On banderole held in left hand of reclining figure: *DECIPIO CUNCTOS VERBIS VULTVQZ BENIGNO VTILE QVAM MVLTIS DISSIMVLASSE FVIT Anno 1579*

Below image: *De waerheijt houwt Gods woordt tot een vast fundament, / (Hoe wel Opinie diueers haer keert en went / Oft smenschen vernuft hier, wist sijn hoochste verheuen, / Van Dypocresije ghedreycht Douwde serpent) / Sij verwinnet noch al want soomen vindt beschreuen, / De Lueghen is de Doot, ende de waerheijt Dleuen / De warheyt helt Godts wortt allayn / Zum rechten grond und Eckstayn / (Wewol Opinio mitt ubermuth / Vilfeltig sich vmbkheren thut / Oder Minschlichs Vernunft gemeyn / Das hochste wil erhaben seyn / von Gleysnerey de alte Slang / De sie hart drouwt und macht gahr bang) / Sie wirts noch vberwinden al / Gleych ons de schrift macht gshal / De Lugen doch den Todt bringt in / De Warheyt gibt Leben und gwin / Verite se maintient par le verbe diuin, / Contre L'Opinion, qui en vain se confie / En la science humaine, et en son sens tresfin. / L'hypocrisie aussi ne le peut mettre a fin: / Elle scait vaincre tout et Mensonge et enuie, / Car Mensonge est la mort et verite la vie.*

Monogrammist C.R. after Maarten de Vos, *Triumph of Truth* (1581) [Fig. 6.6]

Below image: *D'aspri flagelli cinta alpestre Fera / Calcitra, et alza incontr'aluer le corna / L'Inuidia d'ogni error maestra intera / L'opre celesti eterne incolpa, e scorna; Qui l'Hipocrita larua asconder spera / Il giusto, il santo, il pio, ch'il uero adorna / Quest'è con l'Heresia (empio drappello) / Lezo, atra peste al bene, un toscio fello. / Es fuerza tus fuerzas con rauja y furor, / Que quanto mas crezer en tal fantasia. / Creze mi fama y se ue mi ualia. / Mi fe, mi speranza, no admiten horror: / Plazer ni contento no esperes traydor; / Tu engañas los simples con arte mañoso / Por fas o per nefas prometes reposo / Soy yo la*

uerdad de ti uenzedor. / Verite se maintient par le uerbe diuin, Contre l'opinion, que en uain se consie / En la science humaine, et en son sens treffin. / L'ijprocrisie ansi ne le pent mettre a fin / Elle cait uaincre tout, et mensonge et enuie, Car menso[n]ge est la mortet uerite la uie.

Unknown engraver after Maarten de Vos, *Triumph of Truth* (1593) [Fig. 6.7]

Below image: *Spectaclu[m] horre[n]dum: saeu[s] armata colubris / Ingenuu[m] corp[us] nudumq[ue] flagellat Erynnis. / Haereticos fetus pestis Lerneae profundit. / Semicadauer homo sus deq[ue] dolis agit Orbe[m]. / TRIVMPHVS VERITATIS. / Stat tame[n], et forti pede strata uolumina pressat / Relligiosa fides, uerumq[ue] tuetur et haurit / Lumine quadruplici: medio Via Vitaq[ue] Verumq[ue] / Imperat, et latè c[o]elo terraq[ue] triumphat.*

Antonius II Wierix, *Triumph of Truth* [Fig. 6.8]

Below image: *Nil Vero obsistit. capitis nec Opinio cani, / Nec mendax coluber, dissimulans[q]ue liber.*

Unknown engraver, *Triumph of Truth* (1614) [Fig. 6.9]

Below image: *Fax Euangelij lucet succensa per orbem, / Quo simul offertur spes, via, vita, salus. / Mater at errorum foecunda est saeuit Erinni[s], / Mundo gaudentes suasio vana necat. / Das helle licht aus Gottes wort / Ist angezündt au [sic] manchen Ort. / Doch geths in der Welt sältzam zu, / Steckt vol betrug, list vnd vuruh. / Du seigneur la lumiere au monde sa clarté / Espand, elle nous offre le Salut meritè. / Le Monde cependant a un tel bien s'oppose / O Monde malheureux, tu ne scais autre chose.*

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The Mystical Experience—Between Personification and Incarnation: The *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s)

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In his *Clavis mystica*, the first dictionary of the mystical published in Cologne in 1640, the Jesuit theologian, Maximilian van der Sandt, alias Sandaeus, undertakes to defend the *modus loquendi* of the mystics, that is, the methods they use to express the experience of union with God. Here is what he says about the mystical vocabulary in his preface: '[...] the Mystics create words when they do not find any that are able fully to express the sensations of their spirit'.¹ 'Mystical speech' is thus made up of various metaphors and neologisms, 'considered by some to be horrible', such as 'selfishness' ('egoitas') or 'ipseity' ('ipsitas'). And these words create images, since Sandaeus adds, in his *Theologia mystica*, that 'the eye of the contemplative soul' transforms the 'inaccessible light [...]' by means of images, simulacra and symbols that are distant from all created things.²

Rather than dwelling on the long genesis of this symbolic theology, which can be traced back at least as far as the Pseudo-Dionysius, or on all the forms this Dionysian heritage took in Renaissance culture,³ I would like to consider

1 Sandaeus Maximilianus, *Pro Theologia Mystica clavis elucidarium, onomasticon uocabulorum et loquutionum obscurarum, quibus Doctores Mystici, tum ueteres, tum recentiores utuntur ad proprium suae Disciplinae sensum paucis manifestatum* (Cologne, Gualteriana: 1640), n.p.: 'Vocabula imprimis faciunt Mystici, si non inueniant, ad animi sui sensa plenius exprimenda'. This text comes from the book's dedication.

2 Sandaeus Maximilianus, *Theologia mystica, seu contemplatio diuina religiosorum a calumniis uindicata* (Mainz, J. Theobald Schönwetter: 1627) 242: 'Haud sequus, Animae contemplatricis oculus, siue ille Mens vocetur, siue Intelligentia, amandatis rerum omnium creaturarum imaginibus, simulacris, ac symbolis, in Deum ipsum, lucem inaccessibilem'.

3 See the seminal articles by Gombrich E.H., "Icones symbolicae: The Visual Image in Neo-Platonic Thought", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 11 (1948) 163–192; and idem, "Icones symbolicae: Philosophies of Symbolism and Their Bearing on Art", in *Symbolic Images: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance* (Oxford: 1978) 123–195. On the Dionysian heritage in Sandaeus's oeuvre, see Belin C., "Process and Metamorphosis of the Image: Ambivalences of the Anagogic Movement in Dionysian Contemplation", in Melion W.S. –

the resonances of this theory of mystical language within the field of image-making around this time, particularly in the Low Countries.

A Mystical *Modus Pingendi*

What forms did this mystical *modus loquendi* take in the arts, all the while bearing in mind the fact that an artist is not a mystic, given that the latter speaks in the first person while the former merely recounts the lived experiences of others? Or to put the question another way: how can one translate into images something that is not just ineffable but fundamentally invisible, in the sense that the nature of the divine is unfigurable, as also is one's experience of it, an experience often wholly interior? In short, what plastic forms might a mystical language take, the language of God communicating himself to the mystic, and of the human being striving to speak of this revelation? While 'imitation of the invisible does not lie within the domain of painting', as the Spanish art theorist Carducho emphasized,⁴ there continued to be many attempts to do just that. And it soon becomes apparent that these attempts very often contravene the mimetic pact, that is to say, the iconographic and formal conventions which at that time governed the field of representation. This results in visual incongruities very close to what Sandaeus describes as the lexical incongruities of the mystical vocabulary.

Rather than exploring the field of painting as others have done before,⁵ I have chosen one example from the field of allegorical engraving, to illustrate the different modalities of figuration or better transfiguration of the invisible: the *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa*. Commissioned and published by Jacob Mesens of Antwerp in the 1680s, in cooperation with the local community of Discalced Carmelites, the series gives 'a comprehensive visual summa of Teresian spirituality conceived for Carmelites novices, conjoining core Teresian principles with the Thomistic scheme of religious psychology'.⁶

Dekoninck R. – Guiderdoni A. (eds.), *Ut pictura meditatio: The Meditative Image in Northern Art, 1500–1700* (Turnhout: 2012) 247–261; and idem, "La métaphore iconoclaste chez Sandaeus", in Dekoninck R. – Guiderdoni A. (eds.), *Emblemata sacra: The Rhetoric and Hermeneutics of Illustrated Sacred Discourse* (Turnhout: 2007) 267–275.

4 Carducho V., *Diálogos de la Pintura. Su defensa, origen, esencia, definición, modos y diferencias*, ed. F.C. Serraller (Madrid: 1979) 152.

5 See Stoichita V., *Visionary Experience in the Golden Age of Spanish Art* (London: 1995).

6 Wyhe C. van, "The *Idea vitae Teresianae* (1686): The Teresian Mystic Life and its Visual Representation in the Southern Netherlands", in Wyhe C. van (ed.), *Female Monasticism in Early Modern Europe: An Interdisciplinary View* (Aldershot: 2008) 175. Also see Porteman K.,

Even if it has already been analysed by Karel Porteman and Cordula van Wyhe, the visual language of these prints deserves more thorough study, as they constitute one of the very rare attempts at systematic representation of the three ways of spiritual ascent, in a partly allegorical mode.

Persons or Personifications?

The *Idea* consists of one hundred plates accompanied by short verse commentaries at the foot of the pages. The work is divided into five parts. The introduction covers the mental faculties. The following chapters are devoted to the value and practice of mortification, the acquisition of virtues, the exercise of mental prayer and supernatural prayer.⁷ The images in these five sections mainly show Carmelites, both men and women, displaying symbolic attributes, performing spiritual exercises or undergoing mystical experiences. It is important to acknowledge that there have been widely varying interpretations of the identities of these characters, some seeing in them the figures of Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross,⁸ while others have identified them as personifications of the different states of the spiritual life. It is precisely this instability between literal and allegorical interpretation that I would like to explore. This will allow me to take issue with the emblematic reading offered by Porteman and Van Wyhe, who judge that ‘the characters of *Idea vitae Teresianae* must be considered as emblematic and generic.’⁹

It is true that several images derive from the *Iconologia* of Cesare Ripa.¹⁰ This is especially the case in the first three sections, devoted to the faculties of the soul, to the virtues and to the vices—for example, “Poverty” (“Paupertas”) (no. 34) [Fig. 7.1]. Some of these personifications are shown stepping down from pedestals in niches, as if they were effigies coming to life under the gaze of the

“Een emblematische voorstelling van het mystieke leven: de *Idea vitae Teresianae* (± 1686)”, *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 48 (1974) 46–60; and Santiago S., “Iconografía de la vida mística teresiana. Homenaje en el Cuarto Centenario”, *Boletín del Museo e Instituto Camón Aznar* 10 (1982) 15–62.

7 As has been demonstrated by Van Wyhe, the core inspiration for the spiritual and theological content was the work of Tomás de Jesús, and especially his *Divinae orationis methodus*, published in Antwerp in 1623. See Van Wyhe, “The *Idea vitae Teresianae*” 175.

8 Sondermann M.A., *Isabella de Spiritu Sancto* (1606–1675). *Herzbücher* (Grevenbroich: 2005) 103.

9 Ibid. 174.

10 Probably inspired by the Dutch edition of 1644: *Iconologia, of uytbeeldingen des Verstands* (Amsterdam, Dirk Peterszoon Pers: 1644).



FIGURE 7.1 "Paupertas". In *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 34. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain.

spectator, even though they rarely interact with him, thus creating a distance that reminds us that these are indeed personifications of values or abstract ideas, not actual personages [Fig. 7.2]. Others maintain their sculptural identity: they are firmly positioned on podia that signify their transcendence of the things of this world. A nun, to cite one example, masters the disordered passions (no. 10), and reason triumphs over sensuality (no. 11) [Fig. 7.3]. Note too that several of these images represent improbable figures, as if to emphasize all the more their symbolic status. For instance, "Intelligence" ("Intellectus") (no. 18) is shown with her head on fire, while "Modesty" ("Modestia") (no. 47) wears a headdress consisting of two anchors topped by a heart [Fig. 7.4]. In addition, some of the figures sport wings, in line with a convention that immediately announces their allegorical status. More likely, however, the wings indicate that these are creatures of the will,¹¹ whence the virtues receive their impetus.

Once past the first stage of the powers of the soul and the passions, which quite naturally are treated allegorically in the tradition of Ripa, the second section is devoted to mortification, and mixes literal and allegorical language. It begins with "Inner Mortification" ("Mortificatio interior") (no. 15): the nun here is shown holding a hammer and nails, elements that may be understood as attributes referring to the Passion of Christ [Fig. 7.5]. But the second image, "Exterior Mortification" ("Mortificatio exterior") (no. 16), abandons any form of symbolic marker: the same nun is now illuminated by celestial light that appears to permeate an enclosed space [Fig. 7.6]. The movement from interiority to exteriority no doubt explains this change or, better, eschewal of figurative discourse. We might say the same about the "Hatred of Self" ("Odium sui-ipsius") (no. 23), where only the horse's bit stands out as an allegorical attribute among all the 'real' instruments of mortification. The same applies to "Mortification of Self-Love" ("Mortificatio amoris proprii") (no. 22), where the Carmelite is shown, like Narcissus, contemplating his own reflection in the water [Fig. 7.7].¹² We could speak here of a more emblematic mode of figuration, with a tendency to narrativize—thus halfway between allegorical and descriptive figuration. The rest of the second section continues to alternate among these three types of figuration.

The third section is devoted to the exercise of the virtues. It retains a high level of allegorical content, seen in the attributes but also in the settings, as shown by the images of the three theological virtues, especially in "Hope" ("Spes") (no. 29). The image depicts a space that can be construed simultaneously as

¹¹ The presence of wings designates the power of volition that moves the mind.

¹² In the next section, "Patience" ("Patientia") (no. 45) is represented as Andromeda waiting for her God / Perseus.

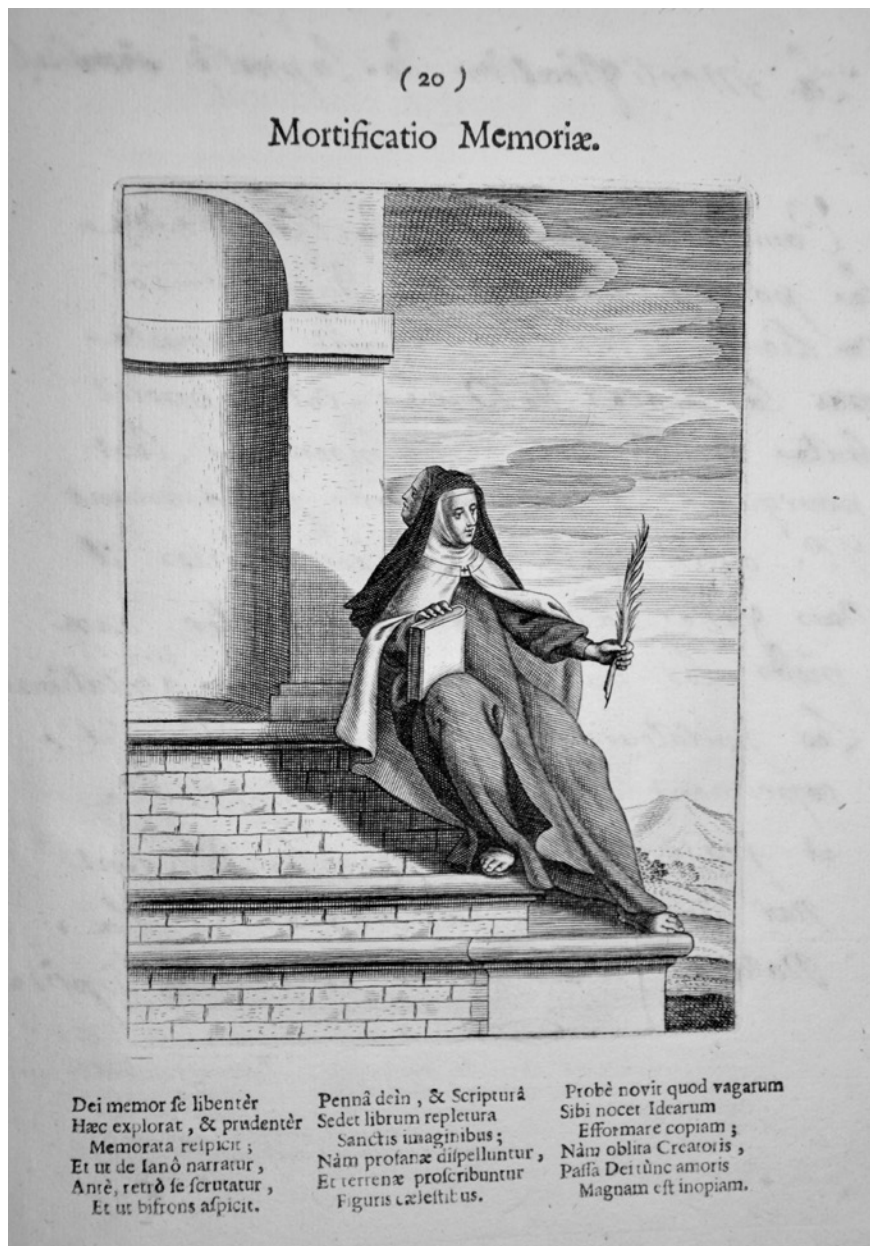


FIGURE 7.2 "*Mortificatio memoriae*". In *Idea vitae Teresianae* iconibus symbolicis expressa (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 20. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain.

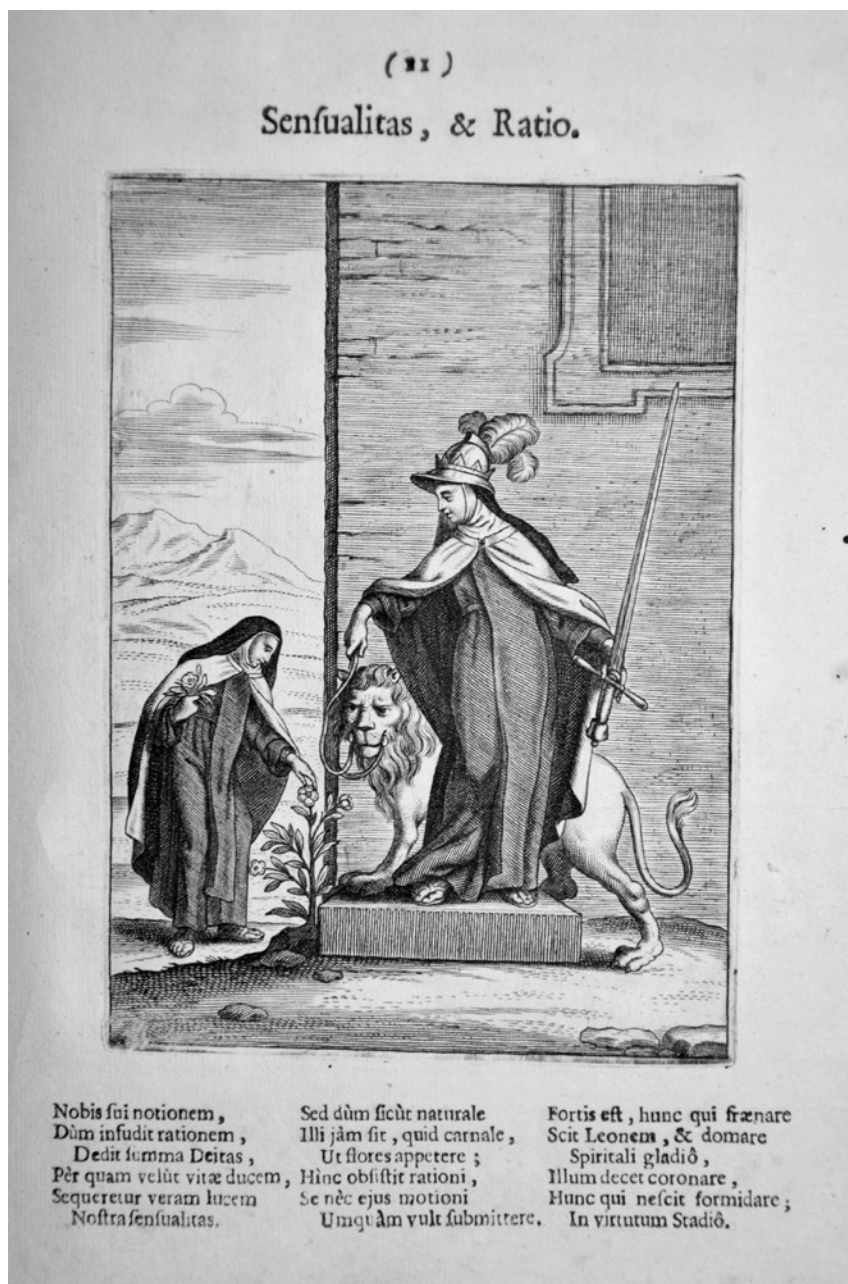


FIGURE 7.3 "Sensualitas & ratio". In *Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 11. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain.

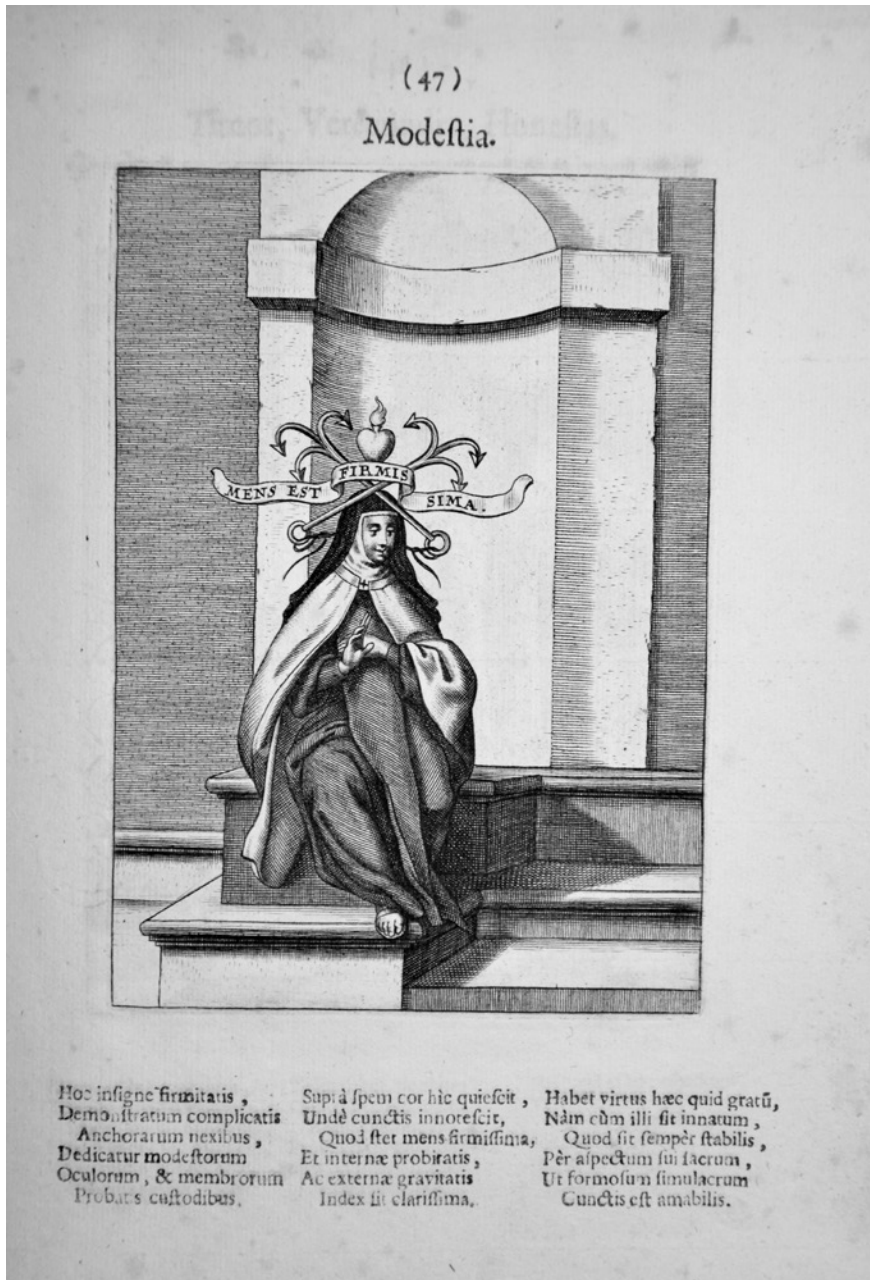


FIGURE 7.4 "Modestia". In *Idea vitae Teresianae* iconibus symbolicis expressa (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 47. Maurits Sabbibliotheek, Louvain).

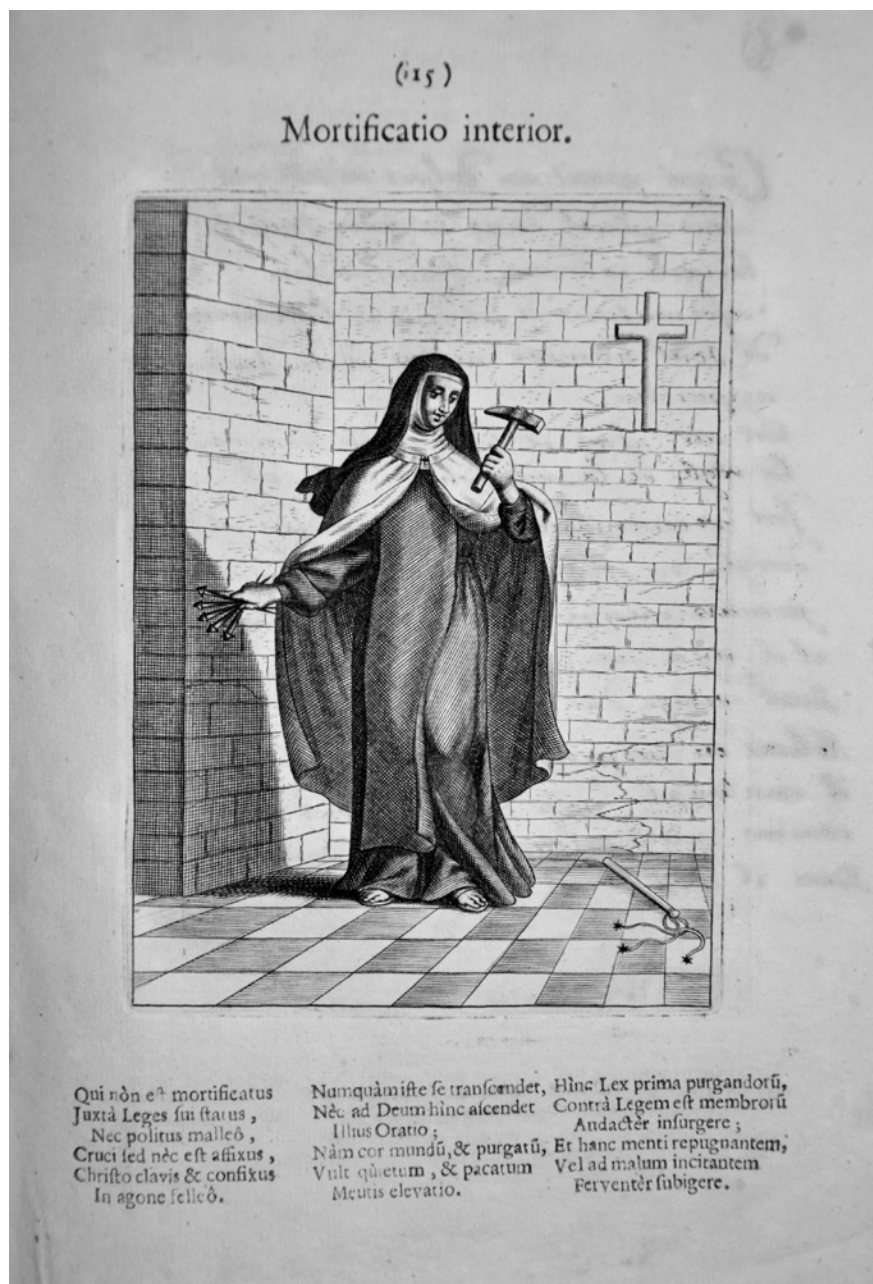


FIGURE 7.5 *"Mortificatio interior"*. Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 15. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain.



FIGURE 7.6 "Mortificatio exterior". In *Idea vitae Teresianae* iconibus symbolicis expressa (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 16. Maurits Sabbhebibliotheek, Louvain.



FIGURE 7.7 "Mortificatio amoris proprii". In *Idea vitae Teresianae* iconibus symbolicis expressa (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 22. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain.

interior, as the nun is shown inside a closed room, and exterior, the ploughed field in which the nun is sowing the seeds of hope [Fig. 7.8], but an exterior that appears to be a metaphor for the nun's soul. And when the symbolic language is insufficient to express the virtue in question, writing comes to the rescue in the form of a phylactery, as in the case of "Austerity" ("Austeritas") (no. 43) or "Poverty of the Spirit" ("Paupertas spiritus") (no. 51). Nevertheless, several engravings in the series contravene this allegorical rule, as demonstrated by the figure of "Penitence" ("Penitentia") with her ferule (no. 31), seen executing a perfectly natural action, whereas the majority of other scenes are absolutely not realistic. For example, "Strength" ("Fortitudo") (no. 41) combines in a strange manner the habit of a Carmelite with the armour of Minerva.

From Abstract Ideas to Living Experiences

It is above all at the end of this section that we begin to see a different order of image that opens the way to the fourth section, which is devoted to the practice of 'mental prayer' ("Oratio mentalis"). This is the case with "Presence of God" ("Praesentia Dei") (no. 59), showing the nun in an attitude of inner prayer, her eyes closed, illuminated by heavenly rays, while a crucifix appears in the clouds at right [Fig. 7.9]. These clouds and the celestial light have the effect of transforming the space of the cell into an indeterminate location between heaven and earth. The image attempts to visualize a strictly mystical experience the nature of which is invisible. This tendency toward literalism is confirmed in the fourth and fifth sections. The various modes of mental and supernatural prayer, but also the obstacles to such prayer—"Distraction" ("Distractio"), for instance (no. 66)—are figured in a highly repetitive manner, in which characters are often placed before an altar and irradiated by divine light.¹³ It would appear that when it comes to giving an account of the most elevated stages of the spiritual life, allegorical and emblematic language falls short, the only remaining traces of it being some very discreet signs such as smoke or hearts (no. 80). While personification still operates, it now embodies a purely experiential state, no longer representing an idea, but instead, an event. As such, if we are justified in speaking of these devices as symbolic figures, we must note that they are used to body forth an experience or impression, rather than

13 There is, however, a break in this sequence with the series of the Four Last Things, beginning with the "Meditation on Death" ("Meditatio mortis") (no. 72), in which the nun discovers her skeletal remains, while the other Things conform to iconographic convention.



FIGURE 7.8 "Spes". *In Idea vitae Teresianae iconibus symbolicis expressa* (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 29. *Maurits Sabbibliotheek, Louvain.*



FIGURE 7.9 "Præsentia Dei". In *Idea vitae Teresianae* iconibus symbolicis expressa (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 59. Maurits Sabbibliotheek, Louvain.

conveying a meaning or a teaching. And they transcribe the experience or impression in a fairly literal way: hence the effect that we are viewing scenes deprived of any allegorical dimension.

And yet, most of these engravings purport to portray an inner state, as emphasized by many of the epigrams accompanying them. Thus, in relation to "Divine Penetration" ("Penetratio divina") (no. 89), the text underlines the movement 'towards the interior' ('ad interna').¹⁴ The spirit's impression of penetration by God, as if by a gentle sound that then emanates from within it, here takes the form of envelopment by light. The same visual device appears in "Presence of God" ("Praesentia Dei") (no. 59), which I have characterized as transitional between the allegorical and the literal. Presence of God refers to an entirely interior state. Allegorical prints, such as Antoon Wierix's *Cor Iesu amanti sacrum*,¹⁵ had previously represented interiority by inserting the child Jesus into an image of the heart, and this had become a very widespread metonymic allegory of the soul. Presence of God moves away from such explicitly allegorical images. The accompanying text adds:

The presence of God is doubly marked, when he sees us and when he speaks to us. The former is more common, but the latter, which is more fruitful for you, is experiential. The former is performed via the intellect ['intellectus'], through which God makes himself present to the sight of the spirit ['mens']; but the latter is constructed by means of figures ['figurae'] or by fixed images or forms ['specierum staturas'], as in a book.¹⁶

In the engraving, the vision of God, with regard to which the meditant is more object than subject, takes the form of rays of heavenly light that fall from the right and illuminate the praying nun.¹⁷ The second mode of divine manifestation takes the form of a crucifix: it seems to emerge from the surrounding clouds, as if it were a mimetic image, miraculously constituted from the rays of light, and yet, as the text indicates, it jointly functions as a symbolic figure.

14 'Mens a Deo penetratur, / Ad interna dum vocatur, / Ut dilectum audiat, / Fit hoc intus leni sono, / Vel acutiori tono, / Ut hunc coram sentiat [...].'

15 Antoon II Wierix, *Cor Iesu amanti sacrum*, c. 1585–1586.

16 'Duplex Dei nos videntis, / Et nobiscum colloquentis / Signatur praesentia; / Una praestat, sed secunda / Tibi forte plus faecunda / Est experientia / Prima sit per intellectum, / Per quem mentis ad conspectum / Deus praesens sistitur; / Sed secunda per figuras, / Specierum & staturas, / Prout liber, / struitur [...].'

17 See Van Wyhe, "The *Idea vitae Teresianae*" 192.

It is useful to compare this image to one of the last engravings in the sequence: its theme is "Visions" ("Visiones") (no. 95), and it employs a similar setting, although the nun is now fully absorbed in inner contemplation [Fig. 7.10]. While God formerly kept himself hidden, as the text makes clear, celestial visions now reveal the 'secrets of the Court of the Trinity'.¹⁸ And these visions are described either as 'divine images' ('divinae icones') or as 'sights seen by the imagination' ('imaginariae icones'). But these two types of image are once again subsumed under the general category of 'figures come from on high' ('supernis figuris'), which here take the form of a crucifix, but also of the tetragrammaton, that is, one of the most abstract images of God. One is crossing the threshold from experience representable by means of external attributes to experience that can be discerned only internally by the nun-exercitant. Is this internal register of experience susceptible to the process of personification? Up to a certain point, yes, since like the human passions, the movements of the soul can potentially be exteriorized, inner states expressed, codified by signs of the type established in seventeenth-century treatises on the passions, which attempt visually to fix the outer expression of interior states. But this type of personification differs fundamentally from the type systematized by Ripa. In its middle and closing sections, the *Idea* patently refrains from using this type of coded language. There is, so to speak, a remotivation of the sign. Or more precisely, we move from a semiotic system based on metaphorical relation to one based on metonymic relation. Beside any symbolical markers, the body speaks by itself of itself, as an inextricable compound of spirit and flesh. In this new epistemological frame, the corporal signs are approached not as symbols but as indices.

From the Metaphorical to the Metonymic

Sandaus proves crucial in helping us better to understand this shift from the metaphorical to the metonymic. He gives an account of the difference between the mystical interpretation ('mystice') of a figure and the symbolic interpretation ('symbolice'), using the example of smoke: 'In its mystical meaning, the smoke that fills the house of the Lord indicates the obscure knowledge of God, smoke that comes from Him, like the smoke of fire [...].

18 'Adsunt caeli visions, / Quae divinae sunt icones, / Vel imaginariae, / Quibus menti Deus adstat, / Et secreta manifestat / Trinitatis Curiae / Sic supernis his figuris, / Edocetur de futuris, / Dum caelesti lumine / Intellectus contemplatur, / Et voluntas inflammatur / Velut ignis flamine [...].'

In its symbolic meaning, smoke designates the error and ignorance of the Jews whose synagogue was full of it.¹⁹ With regard to the mystical meaning, we have a metonymic or indexical relation (the smoke of fire), while with regard to the symbolic meaning, we have a properly metaphorical relation. Whereas symbolic theology, in the sense of the Pseudo-Dionysius, interprets 'symbolic images' ('imagines translatae'), mystical theology supplies literal images, whose obscurity, though no less great, is of a different nature: 'the more the images are literal, the better and more easily the mystic accomplishes his work'.²⁰ The mystical work therefore consists in moving paradoxically from the figured to the literal, in taking symbols at face value, however dissimilar from the divine signified they might be. In addition, their very dissimilitude is what makes it possible for them to say something about the divine. For the resemblance of literalized symbols to the object of contemplation—God—can only be non-mimetic, denatured, obscure in the sense that no true resemblance is possible; moreover, this obscurity is not a function of the divine, but rather, issues from the subject who contemplates God, from his or her human frailty. It is therefore necessary to break with metaphoricality, to refuse analogy. We are in the realm of the literal, whose apparent obscurity compels us to construe the literal as symbolic, though in the end, even the literalized symbol is really no symbol at all, for God can be susceptible to no process of symbolization.

Indeed, in his account of the final stages of the contemplative life, the engraver of the *Idea* casts aside any form of analogy that might consist in representing, to cite an earlier image from the series, "Perseverance in Mortification" ("Perseverentia in mortificatione") (no. 25), 'a nun doing pull-ups on the thin frond of a palm tree' in order to express the idea that the palm of victory is

19 Sandaeus, *Theologia mystica* 220: 'Mystice fumus implens domum Domini obscuram denotat Dei notitiam, qui ab ipso procedit, ut fumus ab igne et infinitam Dei intelligibilitatem ut ignem in fumo absconditam. Symbolice: errorem et ignorantiam Iudaeorum qua impleta fuit Synagoga, ut Hieronymus quoque interpretatur [*Revelation* 15:8]'.

20 Sandaeus, *Theologia mystica* 5: 'Theologiam Mysticam specificè acceptam usurpare quidam vocabula & loquendi formulas minus usitatas, notasque in scholis: tamen haud necessarium illi esse usum Symbolorum, quatenus Symbola, distinguuntur à vocabulis quae sunt rerum signa, & notae propriae: Ratio. Quia Theologia Mystica, sive habitum spectes, sive actum, abit munus suum perfectissime, quamvis imagines, quibus utitur, sint rerum propriae, absque ulla figurata translatione. Imo, quatenus sunt magis propriae, eo melius, expeditiusque negotium suum perficit. Et si posset circa objectum suum versari, absque formarum intellectualium, ullarumque imaginum alienarum interventu, etiam has sperneret [...]'.

the cross on which hangs the person who loves it.²¹ On the contrary, he avoids literalizing the metaphors used by the mystics and present in the epigrams of the *Idea*. As Porteman has rightly observed, the 'relationship between text and image is less than straightforward'.²² For example, in the epigram accompanying the "Languor of the Soul" ("Languor animae") (no. 93), 'branches' of love are described as producing many fruits, chief among which is languor. Unable to enjoy its loved one, the inflated spirit of love withers in heart.²³ None of these metaphors finds any visual equivalent in the engraving; the setting is shown as simple, even austere, thereby evoking, without actually representing, the inner space where divine interventions are actively felt.²⁴ The same could be said about the "Divine Wound" ("Vulneratio divina") (no. 92), which the subscription clearly identifies as the 'transverberation' ('affectum transverberat') of Teresa of Avila. This is shown according to the iconographic conventions notably established in the Carmelite church of Santa Maria della Vittoria by Bernini, who himself offers a fairly literal representation of the saint's mystical experience, as recounted by Teresa herself.

In conclusion, the *Idea vitae Teresianae*, conceived as a 'manual for Carmelite novices needing instruction in the path to spiritual maturity',²⁵ offers a wide spectrum of figurative languages, from personification allegory to descriptive embodiment. It describes a spiritual *cursus* that progresses from the cognition of virtues and vices, translated into conventional symbols, to the phenomenological experience of the divine presence. If personification is a rhetorical figure by which an abstraction is given a human identity, then the spiritual ascent, since it ends with God, that most invisible of entities, who is yet not an abstraction, must finally exceed the signifying potential of personification. The human identity no longer attaches to a fictitious persona, a personification, but instead belongs to a real person, a human exercitant who personifies the spiritual experience of searching for unity with God, in the sense of

21 See Van Wyhe, "The *Idea vitae Teresianae*" 186.

22 Porteman, "Een emblematische voorstelling" 55.

23 'Habet amor velut artus, / Nam producit multos partus / Mii a cum potentia; / Sed est foetus principalis / (Hic interdum est lethalis) / Fit dum mens jam fauciata, / Et amore dilatata / Oilecto non fruitur, / Nam tunc corde contabescit, / Et dum fervor invalescit / Languore consumitur. / Est affectus persuavis, / Sed naturae nimis gravis / Hinc fausta memoria; / Causa Marianae mortis / Paris & Theresae fortis / Fuit in historia'.

24 It is worth mentioning, however, that two distinctively emblematic or even hieroglyphic figures appear in the "Unitive Oration" ("Oratio unionis") (no. 84) and the "Spiritual Engagement" ("Desponsatio spiritualis") (no. 98), where in symbolic images—fiery hearts within a blazing aureole of clouds—express the most unitive stages of the mystical life.

25 Van Wyhe, "The *Idea vitae Teresianae*" 173.

exemplifying the mystical *cursus*. But needless to say, the frontier between personification and exemplification is thin and blurred. This is probably the reason why a reworking of the *Idea* with the same Latin subscriptions, published by the Bavarian Carmelites one century later under the title of *Ichnographia emblematica*,²⁶ completely abandons this problematic indeterminacy. Even if a few engravings from the *Idea* are copied quite faithfully, the engraver of the *Ichnographia* has generally preferred biblical illustrations to convey the main ideas expressed by the same texts. For example, instead of showing outwardly what the nun is experiencing inwardly [Fig. 7.10], the *Visiones* are illustrated by the 'Noli me tangere' [Fig. 7.11], an episode treated as an historical *exemplum* that the reader / spectator can take as a model. For other topics, the choice was made to privilege more concrete and contemporaneous examples of people exemplifying the virtues or vices, as in the case of "Poverty" ("Paupertas"), which is no longer figured in the manner of Ripa, as a nun with a stone hanging from her left hand and wings raising her right hand, but by a young man laying down his rich clothing in order to follow Christ on the cross. These transformations testify to the twilight of early-modern symbolic culture, when allegory became increasingly less fashionable, and personifications in particular were criticized as archaic ways of expressing ideas.²⁷ If the *Idea vitae Teresianae* to a certain degree prefigures this decline, it for the most part continues to participate in the *ars symbolica*, while also modifying the conventions for depicting the spiritual life. From an allegorical language based in Thomistic religious psychology, we go over to a descriptive and, in this sense, literalized account of mystical experience. The *theologia symbolica* gives way to the *theologia mystica*, a mystical-affective theology oriented toward a more subjective and interiorised spirituality. What happens inside the meditant is not rendered by means of symbolic signs, but expressed through the representation of the mystics themselves and of their attendant circumstances. The latter are seen to personify, which is to say, also to exemplify the nature of mystical life. We are guided away from a semiotics of personified ideas, toward a phenomenology of embodied mystical union.

26 *Ichnographia emblematica triplicis ad Deum Tri-Unum mysticae viae [...]* (Augsburg, Ignatius Berhelst: 1779).

27 See Dekoninck R., "Between Fiction and Reality: The Image Body in the Early Modern Theory of the Symbol", in Melion W.S. – Rothstein B. – Weemans M. (eds.), *The Anthropomorphic Lens: Anthropomorphism, Microcosmism and Analogy in Early Modern Thought and Visual Arts*, Intersections: Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture 34 (Leiden – Boston: 2014) 323–337.

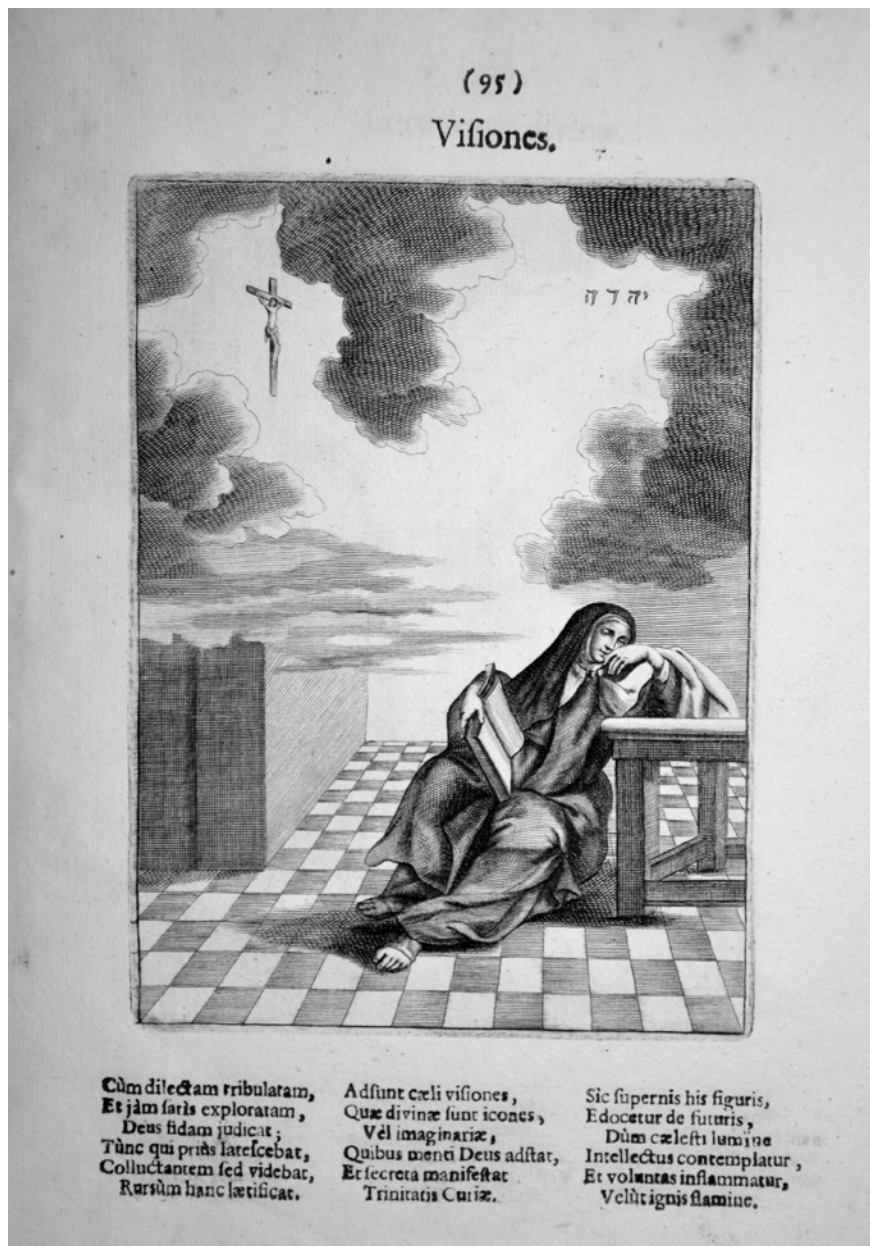


FIGURE 7.10 "Visiones." In *Idea vitae Teresianae* iconibus symbolicis expressa (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: 1680s) no. 95. Maurits Sabbebibliotheek, Louvain.



FIGURE 7.11 "Visiones". In *Ichnographia emblematica triplicis ad Deum Tri-Unum mysticae viae* [...] (Augsburg, Ignatius Berhelst: 1779). Maurits Sabbibliotheek, Louvain.

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PART 4

Personification on Stage: Forces of Living Presence



From the Parade to the Stage: Evolution and Significance of Personifications in Lyon's *Sotties* (1566–1610)

Katell Lavéant

The Lyon *sotties* are an intriguing and atypical corpus of plays. They were performed and printed in Lyon in the second half of the sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century. They continued the tradition of the medieval *sottie* in a period in which new theatrical genres such as comedy and tragedy met with a growing success, and give direct access to the researchers to the situation in which they were performed: the festivals held in the city by various so-called 'joyful companies' ('compagnies joyeuses'). Personifications played an important role in and around these plays. In particular, two figures are striking: the personifications of time and of the printing press, the first a traditional figure in late medieval allegorical drama, the second more specifically put on stage by the printers of Lyon during festivals they organised very regularly during the second half of the sixteenth century. These festivals must have had an important impact on the public life of the city, since they were organised on the streets: they involved both a parade of joyful groups (described more fully below) and the performance of plays. The prominence of the printers' corporation, because of the high economic and cultural impact of book production in the city, must also have given a specific public significance to these festivals.¹ In this context, I shall examine the way in which personifications appear not only on stage but also in the parade during which the plays were performed. It is particularly interesting to consider how and why these peculiar personifications—of a general concept on the one hand, and of an object as well as an activity on the other hand—become tangible figures. By analysing their role in and around the plays, I shall demonstrate how they express the

1 For an outline of book production and its importance in Lyon in the sixteenth century, see Davis N.Z., "Le monde de l'imprimerie humaniste: Lyon", in Chartier R. – Martin J.-P. (eds.), *Histoire de l'édition française*, 3 vols., 1: *Le livre conquérant. Du Moyen Âge au milieu du XVII^e siècle* (Paris: 1982) 255–277. On the organisation of the printers as a corporation (although with some errors on their joyful company), see also Davis N.Z., *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (London: 1975), especially chapters 1 and 4.

public discourse of the printers of Lyon on the historical and political events of their time.

Moreover, by studying how these characters were described in the plays, and how they were portrayed in the booklets that contain the plays, we can attempt to picture how they actually appeared in front of the audience. In particular, these personifications combine traditional features of allegorical characters from the medieval *sotties* and morality plays with new Renaissance symbols and accessories; in other words, there is no break between the two periods in this theatrical tradition, but rather a continued rhetorical discourse, renewed by images and metaphors borrowed from the Greek and Latin mythology. I contend that this specific, synthetic use of personification was a conscious choice of the authors, which produced original theatrical figures. The printers thereby adapted the medieval setting of the theatrical parade to the new features of Renaissance discourse, in order to include a broad audience in the performances of the joyful companies.

Context and Corpus

The Lyon *sotties* are seventeen short plays that were performed by the joyful company of the printers of Lyon, the so-called ‘supposts de la Coquille’, during a public festival organised by similar companies of this city in the sixteenth century, that is to say, by festive groups of men gathering together in order to organise playful activities, often with the (financial) support of the local authorities.² The printers would subsequently publish the plays they had performed during the festivals: surviving editions date from between 1566 and 1610.³ Several accounts of parades survive, and these contain the texts of the plays performed, which were also printed under various titles in 1566, 1568 and 1578.⁴ Separate texts of the plays, without an account of the festivities, were

2 For a survey of the characteristics of these groups, see Lavéant K., “The Joyful Companies of the French-Speaking Cities and Towns of the Southern Netherlands and their Dramatic Culture (Fifteenth–Sixteenth Centuries)”, in Dixhoorn A. van – Sutch S.S. (eds.) *The Reach of the Republic of Letters. Literary and Learned Societies in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: 2008) 79–118.

3 Some of these plays were published in the nineteenth century; the whole corpus is now available in Bouhaïk-Gironès M. – Koopmans J. – Lavéant K. (ed.), *Recueil des sotties françaises*, 3 vols. (Paris: 2014).

4 *Recueil faict au vray de la chevauchee de l'asne, faicte en la ville de Lyon et commencee le premier jour du mois de septembre mil cinq cens soixante six* (Lyon, Guillaume Testefort: 1566) (Municipal library of Lyon, BM Rés. 356055); *Discours du temps passé et du present, publié en*

also published in most cases with the title *Plaisants devis* (Pleasant discourses). A complete study of the archival evidence pertaining to these practices is still needed, but it seems these celebrations were meant to be annual events (although plays do not survive for every year, and some plays evoke disruptions of this rhythm by explicitly mentioning that the printers had been prevented from organising their festivities for one or more years).⁵ They involved a parade of joyful companies through the streets of Lyon, the performance of at least one play at some point during this parade, and banquets afterwards. These celebrations can be compared with the earlier practices of joyful groups in other parts of France and French-speaking areas, for instance the company of justice officials and clerks or so-called Basoche in Paris and the 'joyful companies' in the Southern Low Countries, in the fifteenth century and early sixteenth century.⁶ As for the specificities of these festivities in Lyon, two features deserve attention: the spatial and professional organisation of joyful companies within the city, and the prolonged existence of the *sottie* as a theatrical genre.

The organisation of the joyful companies of Lyon deserves a more in-depth study. Certainly, from the plays and their paratext, some Lyon companies were clearly trade-oriented. The printers' Compagnie de la Coquille (Company of the scallop shell) is the most obvious example, as it was in charge of organising theatrical festivities, but we also note the presence of a Basoche in Lyon, mentioned in the *sotties* of 1566, 1593, 1596 and 1601. Other groups represented

la ville de Lyon, par les trois supposts de l'Imprimerie, accompagnez du Seigneur de la Coquille et de plusieurs compagnons Imprimeurs en bon equipage, avec tabourins, fifres, timbales, et autres instrumens, le jour des Brandons 1568, suyvant leur ancienne coustume (Lyon, Pierre Brotot: 1568) (Municipal library of Lyon, BM Rés. B493544); *Recueil de la chevauchee, faicte en la ville de Lyon, le dixseptiesme de Novembre 1578. Avec tout l'Ordre tenu en icelle* (Lyon, Guillaume Testefort, Pierre Ferdelat & Claude Bouilland: 1578) (Municipal library of Lyon, BM Rés. 356054).

- 5 Texts survive for the following years: 1566, 1568, 1574, 1578, 1580, 1581, 1584, 1585, 1589, 1593, 1594, 1596, 1601 and 1610. In some instances, they survive in a single copy (this is the case for the *Discours du temps passé* of 1568), kept individually or in a collection of texts bound together (two such collections exist, one at the British Library and one at the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal in Paris). In other cases, a single text is transmitted in several copies: this is the case for the *Chevauchee* of 1566, of which there exist at least three printed and two manuscript copies. For details about the editions, see Bouhaïk-Gironès – Koopmans – Lavéant, *Recueil des sotties* 1. From this point on and for the sake of clarity (especially in the case of the plays displaying the common title *Plaisants devis*), when referring to a specific play, I use the year in which it was performed and printed.
- 6 Bouhaïk-Gironès M., *Les clercs de la Basoche et le théâtre comique* (Paris: 2007); Lavéant K., *Un théâtre des frontières. La culture dramatique dans les provinces du Nord aux xv^e et xvi^e siècles* (Orléans: 2011).

a specific neighbourhood, street or parish, such as the Baron de la Rue-Neuve or the Abbots of Saint-Michel, Saint-Georges and Saint-Vincent (1566, 1578). Obviously, in some cases, profession and location in the city formed a coherent whole, when a trade had a long tradition of being implanted in a specific neighbourhood. The name of the Compagnie de la Coquille is a reference to the parish of Saint-Jacques, in the vicinity of which many printers had set up their shop, in the rue Mercière. But this was also notably the case for the tanners and dyers who worked in the neighbourhood of Bourg-Neuf, which had its own joyful company (1566, 1578).⁷ The surviving plays underline the prominent role of the printers in the organisation of these festivities. They seem to have led the way by calling the other companies to gather together, leading them in the parade and performing a play. However, the evidence may be misleading: as they printed their own material, the printers may have exaggerated the importance of their joyful company compared to the others. In any case, the fact that the printers actually printed their texts afterwards is extremely useful for us, as it is quite unique among French joyful companies. In other regions, these companies often kept no records, and therefore only a handful of texts have survived, which often prevents us from having a precise idea of the literary production of these groups.

Joyful companies have been seen as a medieval phenomenon. However, archival evidence seems to indicate they were active until at least the middle of the sixteenth century (as is for instance the case in the cities of Northern France and the Southern Low Countries). The example of Lyon shows that, in this city, joyful companies also maintained their festive practices in the second half of the sixteenth century, despite the tense context of the wars of religion. For their theatrical performances, they specifically chose to write *sotties*. Often presented as a medieval genre (although the vast majority of the extant texts date from the period 1450–1550), the *sottie* can be described in brief as a play in which fools ('sots') speak together about contemporary events in a rather cryptic way. The plot is secondary (when there is one), as the accent is laid on the comments and witticisms of the fools, rather than on solving a problem or a moral dilemma. The play must often be seen as one moment in a larger performative situation such as a festival or a parade.⁸ It may seem surprising that the printers of Lyon, who, thanks to their trade, were aware of the literary innovations of the period, deliberately kept writing *sotties*, rather than turning

7 Bouhaïk-Gironès – Koopmans – Lavéant, *Recueil des sotties* 1, 371–380.

8 On generic and historical aspects, see the 'Introduction générale', 7–39, in Bouhaïk-Gironès – Koopmans – Lavéant, *Recueil des sotties* 1, which recapitulates the historiography on this question.

to comedies. Several reasons can be adduced for such a choice. Comedy, the new type of play that appeared around 1550 and drew its characters and plots directly from the plays of Antiquity it took as a model, was immediately successful among humanist authors, and as such often performed in colleges and universities. However, this type of play did not gain wider audiences until only much later, with its heyday in the seventeenth century. Joyful groups continued to write *sotties*, first because these plays could appeal to a large audience used to their traditional backdrop; and second, because they were inscribed in this long festive tradition, and as such lent themselves particularly well to being performed during the parade of the joyful companies.⁹ However, from a stylistic and thematic point of view, literary tastes evolved in the second half of the century, and the discursive features of the *sotties* needed to evolve as well. This is why, while the printers stuck to the formal, performative frame of the *sotties*, they gradually introduced new figures (such as mythological ones), and adapted the existing ones, especially personifications. It seems that the printers saw in the specific genre of the *sottie* a more fitting way of expressing their opinions, in a civic context of joyful festivities that remained important in the public life of Lyon until the beginning of the seventeenth century. This type of play apparently had the elasticity that could accommodate the introduction of literary novelties into a traditional mode of performance. Personification thus appears as a perfect stylistic mirror of the genre of the *sottie*: inherited from the medieval tradition, it could also evolve according to new standards and necessities to reflect the changes in the printers' discourse, as I will demonstrate after briefly presenting the context of performance of the plays.

Actors and Characters of the Lyon Parades and Plays

The Lyon *sotties* are unusual because we can reconstruct quite precisely the setting in which at least some of them were performed, thanks to the accounts of the parades that were printed afterwards. From the descriptions, which allude to the repetition of usual practices,¹⁰ we can assume these parades also

9 As underlined by Koopmans J., "Les *sotties* lyonnaises: le théâtre médiéval à la fin du xvi^e siècle", in Emerson C. – Longtin M. – Tudor A. (eds.) *Drama, Performance and Spectacle in the Medieval City: Mélanges Alan Hindley* (Leuven: 2010) 47–72.

10 The first texts mention customs that seem older than the first surviving printed account (1566): 'comme de coustume est de faire ausdictes chevauchées' (as is customarily done during these parades) in the 1566 *Chevauchée* 18, fol. Civ, 'suyvant leur ancienne coustume' (following their old custom) in the 1568 *Discours* (frontpage), etc.

took place in years for which only a printed record of the play survive, without any description of the festivities surrounding it, and even before we find the first printed records of these festivals. As such, these parades were not unique. They recall similar ones organised by the joyful companies of the Southern Low Countries, as well as the 'monstre' or parade by the Parisian Basoche.¹¹ The difference here is that the parade and the performance of the *sottie* were not dissociated, as was the case in these earlier examples. Rather, the plays were integrated into the parades, and therefore often referred to figures that were present in the relevant procession. Although more research is needed to complement the corpus with archival evidence, we can reconstruct the parade as follows: the joyful companies marched through the city and paused regularly in order to perform plays that in fact had a double audience, the people on the streets and the members of the other joyful groups. In the Lyon *sotties*, a trio of 'supposts' replaces the characters of the fools. 'Supposts' is a medieval term referring to servants, here the men in service of the Printing Press, hence: the printers. In some of the plays, the 'supposts' call on others to join the parade (one can imagine the parade entering a specific street or neighbourhood and pausing there so that the 'supposts' could invite the local joyful group to join them in a ritualised way). In other plays, they comment on the current situation of the city and its inhabitants, and make allusions to economic circumstances as well as to events such as war and peace. In these cases, as we will study in more detail below, the audience would receive brief texts during the performance, that explained the significance of the play and especially of its personifications. The plays end on a call to go drinking that certainly reflects the way the parades ended, with libations and banquets either in taverns or in private places booked by the joyful groups for the purpose.

Cross-examining the plays and their festive context reveals important differences between the following, sometimes porous, categories in late medieval and early modern drama: actor, character and personification. The members of joyful companies, led by their chiefs, were dressed up in a recognizable way (with specific colours and accessories representing their company) or even doubly dressed up, such as the monks of the mock Abbeys of the Temple and of Saint-Michel, who, in 1566, were dressed as women:

First came the aforesaid Abbot of the Temple accompanied by the Abbot of Saint-Michel, in good company, followed by more than a hundred

11 Lavéant, *Un théâtre des frontières* 64–74; Bouhaïk-Gironès, *Les clercs de la Basoche* 104–108.

monks of the said abbeys; most of them dressed up as women, in diverse and strange fashion, holding distaffs and other fanciful staffs.¹²

The play following this description then starts with the horrified exclamations of the three 'supposts', seeing this army of menacing women.¹³ As such, the members of the joyful companies played a role in the procession; they were actors in these festivities. These were men dressed as monks dressed as women, who probably sported fierce facial expressions in order to make the spectators laugh upon seeing these mock women-warriors, but they were neither actors in the play nor personifications. Among them were the three actors who played the characters of the *sotties*, the three 'supposts' dialoguing together. These characters can be seen either as individuals or as stock characters speaking for their community, but they were not personifications either. However, a third category was present during these festivities: personifications walking in the procession, who might or might not appear on stage afterwards. In what follows I explore the meaning and use of such personifications in and around the theatrical performances, by studying two specific examples: the dual personification of Past Times and Present Times, especially in the 1568 *sottie* and festival, and the shift in the description of the printing press from a medieval personification, Lady Printing Press (*Dame Imprimerie*), to the muse Typosine over the period 1566–1610, especially when this personification appeared on stage in 1610. It is particularly interesting to contrast the use of these two personifications because they were used in a peculiar way by the printers, as mute figures on and outside the stage. My contention is that these personifications were used differently from other, more traditional personifications, in order to support the printers' message and as a specific mode of communication with the audience.

Medieval Personifications of Time in the Lyon *Sotties*

The most striking of the characters derived from the *sottie* tradition and still present in the Lyon *sotties* is Present Times (*Temps Présent*), as opposed to

12 'Premierement marchoit ledict Abbé du Temple, accompagné de l'Abbé saint Michel, en bon equipage, accompaignez de plus de cent Moynes desdictes Abbayes; la plus part d'iceux habillez en femmes, de diverses et estranges façons, portans en main quenouilles à filler et autres bastons fantasques'. *Chevauchée* 8, fol. A4v.

13 Bouhaïk-Gironès – Koopmans – Lavéant, *Recueil des sotties* 1, 397.

Good Times (*Bon Temps*), in Lyon also called Past Times (*Temps Passé*). In many plays in the fifteenth century, Good Times had been a symbol of better times during which everything went well.¹⁴ It evoked a golden age, now lost, to which characters referred nostalgically in order to create a contrast with the present situation, which had inevitably deteriorated. This figure has an interesting specificity: the past is often represented by a personification (Good Times), but in some cases it is given a human individuality, in the shape of Roger Bontemps (evoked but not present on stage in Lyon 1593).¹⁵ In the different surviving morality plays and *sotties* on this topic, the personification of good times is either absent or present on stage. In the first case, the characters call for him on stage, but he never comes, and they keep searching for him in vain and lamenting his loss throughout the play. In the second case, he appears on stage, often in a sorry state (the good times have deteriorated), or as a running character that cannot be caught (since it is hard to find and keep the good times).¹⁶ In the case of the Lyon *sotties*, he does not appear on stage, but is evoked in several plays by the 'supposts' (1568, 1593, 1594).

This figure represents a complex medieval version of the myth of the Golden Age. On the one hand, it allows the development of broad, abstract considerations about the dire consequences of an unstable context and is in this sense a way for the playwright to allude more or less directly to the current political situation. On the other hand, it stresses very tangible aspects of what makes life bearable for the people, especially those whose precarious situation can easily tip from barely scraping out a living to utter destitution.¹⁷ This is why plays on this topic are often set in spring, its improved weather conditions creating the possibility of a better life after a dire winter. Very basic elements, such as the quality of beverages (wine and beer especially) and the price of essential food such as bread, are central topics of discussion between the characters, since they touch on vital aspects of existence (for instance in Lyon 1568 and

14 Roch J.-L., "Le roi, le peuple et l'âge d'or : la figure de Bon Temps entre le théâtre, la fête et la politique (1450–1550)", *Médiévales* 22–23 (spring 1992) 187–206.

15 On the character of Roger Bontemps in morality plays and *sotties*, see Lavéant, *Un théâtre des frontières*, 356–367; Koopmans J. (ed.), *Le Recueil de Florence. 53 farces imprimées à Paris vers 1515* (Orléans: 2011) 53–54.

16 The running character of 'Le Temps qui court' appears in the *Sottie des Trompeurs* in Bouhaïk-Gironès – Koopmans – Lavéant, *Recueil des sotties* 1, 91–123.

17 Koopmans J., "Les démunis mis en scène: satire ou utopie, répression ou contestation", in Sossons J.-P. – Thiry C. (eds), *Les Niveaux de vie au moyen âge. Mesures, perceptions et représentations* (Louvain-la-Neuve: 1999) 123–139.

1574). Interestingly, this medieval system of references was still in use in the later Lyon *sotties*, well into the end of the sixteenth century, which confirms its evocative power for the audience (for instance: 1593, 1594). This happened at a moment when this city found civil peace again, after a troubled period of political instability caused by the conflicts of the wars of religion and especially the episode of the Holy League. In the plays, the 'supposts' express their hope for the return of Good Times at last.¹⁸

In contrast with the invisible Good Times or Past Times, the representation of Present Times did appear on stage in the Lyon *sottie* performed in 1568, but in a peculiar way, since this figure did not speak. The play, again, has no real plot. It is rather a dialogue between the three 'supposts' on the current political and economic situation of the city and of the country: they complain that Good Times has disappeared, and with him peace and prosperity, because now the reign of Present Times has come. They describe this personification as if it were on stage, or close enough to it for the spectators to see it—we shall see below that this was most likely the case. Present Times appears as a frightening man with two faces, holding a scythe and ready to grab everyone, a living image of death reaping human souls.¹⁹ The dialogue of the three 'supposts' is punctuated by deictic verbs and describes this personification in detail, reinforcing the impression that Present Times is directly pointed at by the characters:

First suppost

Alas, my God, alas, my God,
Present Times is so hostile!

Second suppost

I'm afraid that I'll fall backwards
When I see how fierce he looks.

Third suppost

As for me, I don't dare to speak
Seeing his equipment [weapons].

18 The members of the Holy League or Ligue, contesting the authority of the King, took over the leadership of Lyon between 1589 and 1593, a situation alluded to in three *sotties*: 1589, 1593, 1594. See Bouhaïk-Gironès – Koopmans – Lavéant, *Recueil des sotties* 1, 509–557.

19 Bouhaïk-Gironès – Koopmans – Lavéant, *Recueil des sotties* 1, 433–436, ll. 57–100.

First suppost

He will spare neither fool nor wise man:
 See with what he is equipped! (...)
 The scythe he holds is heavy:
 It is not a weapon of war (...)²⁰

Indeed, the play is followed, in the booklet published after the festivities, by a small text describing Present Times:

Present Times walking in front of the 'supposts', holding a big scythe in his hand, wearing two sickles on his shoulders, and on his chest a big knife, having two frightening faces and wearing weapons on his body [or: armour on his torso], and the rest of his clothes decorated with fiery flames: a very horrific thing to see.²¹

From this excerpt, we can conclude that the personification of Present Times was indeed present in the parade in 1568: a man was wearing this costume, and walked through the streets during the parade, ahead of the printers. When the parade came to a halt for the performance of the play, he must have stood next to the stage or on it, and the three actors on stage must have been pointing to him and pointing him out to the spectators during the performance. It is also

20 *Le Premier*

Helas, mon Dieu, hélas, mon Dieu
 Que le Temps Present est divers!

Le Second

Je crains de tumber à l'envers
 En le regardant si farouche.

Le Troisième

De moy, je n'ose ouvrir la bouche.
 Le voyant en tel equippage.

Le Premier

Espargner ne veut fol ny sage:
 Voyez comme il est équipé! (...)
 Le faulx qu'il porte est pesant:
 Ce n'est pas instrumens de guerre.

Ibid. 433–436, ll. 57–64, 69–70. The last line evokes the fact that the scythe the personification holds is not a weapon of war that would be used only to fight against soldiers, but rather the scythe of death, used indiscriminately to kill all humans, hence a particularly menacing instrument for the audience and the 'supposts' alike.

21 'Le temps Present marchant devant les suppos portant en la main ung grand faulx, et sur ses espauls, deux vollans, et au devant de sa poytrine, un grand cousteau, ayant deux visaiges farouches, et arme du corps, et le reste de ses habitz à flammes de feu, chose hideuse à veoir'. *Discours*, fol. B3.



FIGURE 8.1 *Temps Présent* on the title page of the *Discours du Temps Passé et du Présent* (Lyon, Pierre Brotot: 1568). Lyon, Municipal library, BM Rés. B493544.

IMAGE © MUNICIPAL LIBRARY, LYON.

worth noting that the front page of the booklet bears an engraving that seems to represent the same personification, although its attributes are slightly different: it holds a scythe but has only one face and is wearing a plain cloth [Fig. 8.1].

It is represented eating a child, which assimilates it to Kronos devouring his children. The name of this Titan and that of the Greek personification of Time, Chronus, are spelled very similarly in French: Cronos / Chronos, which can account for the syncretic representation of both entities here. The differences between this image and the description of Present Times in the booklet may

be explained by the likelihood that the printer reused a woodblock used for another (mythological?) text, thinking it was close enough to the description of Present Times to decorate the front page of this print.

To underline the specificity of personification on stage, Estelle Doudet insists on the difference between the world of the written text (such as moral treatises or allegorical fictions) and the world of drama. In written texts meant for individual reading, a narrator can describe the personification and expose its allegorical meaning, thus allowing the reader to reach a clear understanding of this figure. On stage and in the absence of a narrator, a personification needs to achieve autonomy thanks to visualisation and the reinvestment of meaning in the spoken word. That is to say, this personification must present clear visual elements as well as utter words that allow the spectator to identify it as such and to understand its message.²² As underlined by James Paxson, speech is a crucial element in the definition of personification.²³ Can we then talk of personification in the case of Present Times, since this figure does not utter its own message? In this case, the absence of discourse is compensated by the presentation of the figure during the parade (indeed this is a situation described by Doudet as a strategy to introduce the personifications in some theatrical festivals), and by its description on and off stage by others. In the 1568 festival, before the actions and meaning of Present Times were described by the 'supposts' on stage, the audience had been prepared for decoding the personification in two ways. During the parade, the spectators could see it in the streets, and they were also given leaflets on which was printed a poem describing the negative meaning of this figure.²⁴ We see here the same mechanism as that described by Doudet: it combines the visualisation of the personification with an external discourse that allows its meaning to be understood, even if the personification itself does not speak. As such, it functions in a way similar to the 'allegorical ekphrasis' ('allegorische Ekphrasis') described by Werner Helmich, that is to say the auto-description of a personification in order to identify it for

22 Doudet E. "Oiseuse et Tartelette. Personnage et personnification allégorique, des narrations au théâtre (XIII^e–XVI^e siècle)", in Brun L. et al. (eds.), *Le Moyen Âge par le le Moyen Âge, même. Réception, relectures et réécritures des textes médiévaux dans la littérature française des XIV^e et XV^e siècles* (Paris: 2012) 278–301; Doudet E. *Essai sur les jeux moraux en français (1430–1560)*, dissertation for the 'Habilitation à diriger des recherches', Université Paris IV Sorbonne (Paris: 2013) 269–327. This unpublished monograph is to be published in 2016 at Classiques Garnier, Paris (provisional title: *L'Ecole du théâtre. Moralités et jeux allégoriques en français (XV^e–XVI^e siècles)*).

23 Paxson J.J., *The Poetics of Personification*, Literature, Culture, Theory 6 (Cambridge: 1994), see chapter 1: 'A history of personification theory'.

24 This poem, composed of three octets of decasyllables, is reproduced after the text of the play in the *Discours* fol. B2v.

the spectators.²⁵ However, in this case, it functions through the combination of an oral discourse (the 'supposts' in the play) and a written medium (the printed poem) that gives the key to the substance of the personification, which remains mute and does not gloss itself.

In the 1568 festival, the play as well as the poem referred to the troubled times of the wars of religion and their impact on the local Lyon context. The armed conflict between French Catholics and Protestants lasted from 1562 to 1598, and saw troubled years and prominent battles but also brief periods of respite. Most of our seventeen Lyon *sotties* were written and performed during this period, and although some do not deal with this religious conflict as a main topic, they all contain direct or indirect allusions to it, and to the troubled times in which their authors and spectators lived. Indeed, Lyon was briefly in the hands of the Protestants in 1562–1563, before surrendering to the king. There was a brief period between 1563 and 1567 during which Protestants and Catholics worked together in the municipal council or Consulat, but the Catholics gradually took power back from the Protestants by excluding their representatives from the council. There were also several dramatic events leading to a massacre in Lyon at the end of August 1572, a few days after the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre in Paris. The printers needed the support of the municipal authorities to be allowed to perform in public and print their plays afterwards. It is therefore not surprising that the plays of 1566 carefully avoided political allusions at a time when the Consulat was divided, while they clearly took the side of the Catholic king from 1568 onwards, that is to say from the moment the Catholics had regained authority in Lyon.

Indeed, in the 1568 festival, the texts on Present Times allow an anti-Protestant reading of this personification. In the poem that accompanies the performance, the figure is described as being accompanied by the vices that caused the wars of religion: Hypocrisie, Folle Opinion, Rébellion:

Temps Present is nothing but Hypocrisy,
Together with Mad Opinion:
He has chosen to follow Rebellion
Because of whom the nobility is divided (...)²⁶

25 Helmich W., *Die Allegorie im französischen Theater des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: 1976) 46–50.

26 Le Temps present ce n'est qu'Hypocrisie,
Accompagné de Folle Opinion:
Qui a pour soy Rebellion choisie
Dont la noblesse est en division (...)
Discours fol. B2v, ll. 9–12.

At a time when the Catholics were in power in Lyon, such notions clearly pointed the finger at Protestants for being the supporters of a wrong faith and troublemakers who chose to rebel against the authority of the king, causing a great divide among the members of the nobility. In the play, the 'supposts' underline the fact that these vices, evoked as allegories (together with Heresy and Disobedience), had been banned from France when Temps Passé reigned. In conjunction with the poem, we therefore understand that these negative allegories are companions of Present Times, or even facets of his being. However, they do not appear on stage. They are evoked as if from afar, while the personification of Present Times embodies everything that has gone wrong. Present Times thus embodies not only the current situation with its very tangible consequences, but also a larger spectrum of abstract notions that help to explain the deterioration of the present context. The personification is central here, as it becomes the embodiment not only of an abstract notion, the 'temps présent', but also of several allegories that are only evoked in the discourse, but not represented in the flesh. It is a very economical way of placing a series of abstract and complex notions in one character, thanks to the double medium of the text (the poem read by the audience) and the performance (the appearance of Present Times on or near the stage). This use of the personification in a combined strategy of performance and reading is also a more interesting and original technique of presentation than, for instance, the more conventional figure of the 'Pauvre Monde' (Poor or Sick World) in the *sottie* of 1574, which draws heavily on traditional patterns of late medieval drama.²⁷ In this play, Pauvre Monde is sick and looking for a cure. Dubious medicines with fanciful Latin names are presented to him by Le Médecin (the Physician), whose pedantic speech is mocked by the 'supposts'. This literal manner of debating about everything that does not go well in the world was used in many moral and joyful French plays in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It might be argued that from a performative point of view, this traditional way of staging these issues would be more evocative for the audience, since the personification becomes a character that speaks and takes part in the play—a somewhat rounder character than the flat figure of Present Times, which remains a mute personification hovering at the edges of the play in the festival of 1568. However, by becoming a character in the play, Monde Malade appears as a mere individual to which the spectator may relate on a personal level, but which loses its symbolic impact as a personification, while Present

27 See for instance Koopmans J., "L'allégorie théâtrale au début du XVI^e siècle: le cas des pièces profanes de Marguerite de Navarre", *Renaissance and Reformation* 26,4 (2002) 65–89.

Times, by remaining a mute and ominous figure, is able to retain its polysemic, abstract significance and at the same time its threatening stature in the eyes of the audience.

From Medieval to Renaissance Personifications

While, as described above, the Lyon *sotties* are clearly inscribed in a framework inherited from the medieval tradition of this dramatic genre, at the same time we can see a growing use of references to the Greek and Latin literature the Lyon printers had been publishing since the beginning of the sixteenth century. This is especially obvious in the new set of references used to underline the consequences of conflict, when religious tensions threatened to turn into a civil war. A number of mythological figures were then summoned in the various *sotties*. First, we see mentions of divinities linked to war in Antiquity such as Bellona, the goddess of war (1581, 1596, 1601)²⁸ or Janus (1594, 1596, 1610), whose temple had a great symbolic significance in Rome, since the opening or closing of its doors indicated a state of war or of peace.²⁹ In the plays, notably, it is King Henri IV who has the crucial role of closing the door of this temple to indicate that peace has been restored (1594 and 1596). Other divinities associated with violence and death are also evoked by the 'supposts': the Furies or Erinyes, goddesses of justice and revenge, the Moirai or Parcae, divinities of destiny, as well as various monsters. Such references are multiplied in the last *sotties* (1601 and 1610), but it is worth noting that some of these figures appeared in earlier *sotties* as well. For instance, Atropos, the Parca who cuts the thread of life, was already invoked in the 1568 play: together with Satan, she is portrayed as repellent to the characters of the play, who want to rejoice despite the difficult times.³⁰ This is a good example of the way these *sotties* try to unify the metaphorical traditions of the Middle Ages and of Renaissance.

The authors of the *sotties* also made use of beneficial mythological and historical figures that could counterbalance the influence of negative divinities and end war. Astraea (*Astrée*), goddess of justice, is prominent. Latin authors (such as Virgil in the famous Eclogue 4 of the *Bucolics*) often invoked her to announce the return of the Golden Age. It is not surprising, therefore, that the 'supposts' also call for her in the *sotties* of 1589, 1594 and 1601.³¹ Other historical

28 Ibid. 479, l. 52; 565, ll. 78; 583, l. 55.

29 Ibid. 545, l. 44; 565, l. 79; 618, l. 294.

30 Ibid. 438, l. 121.

31 Ibid. 19, l. 105; 545, l. 48; 581, ll. 29, 249.

figures, such as emperor Augustus and Alexander the Great, and mythological figures of kings and heroes, such as Hercules and Achilles, became metaphors of either the King of France, or the Governor of Lyon (1594, 1596, 1601, 1610). Such comparisons are anything but surprising in texts of this period, but mixed with the medieval figures, they contribute to a second network of references that enriches and renews the first one, inherited from the Middle Ages.³²

However, these personifications are merely descriptive or paraphrastic, to use the terminology of Paxson.³³ They are described by the 'supposts' in the plays but have no dramatic function. Another figure is more interesting, as it is not only illustrative of this blend of old and new rhetoric, but also presents a peculiar case of a personification that gradually materialises in the plays. This is the personification of Lady Printing Press (*Dame Imprimerie*), later called Typosine. The way she appears in most of the *sotties* is revealing. First, she is summoned to the parade of the joyful companies of Lyon in the *sotties* of 1566, just like other figures such as the Count of the Basoche.³⁴ She is also described in the account of the parade as marching with her 'compagnons de la Coquille', together with the 'Seigneur de la Coquille' who is the leader of this group.³⁵ In contrast with the other joyful companies, which have only one leader, the Coquille therefore seems to have one leader and one protecting lady. It is not possible, from these texts, to know what differentiated their roles within the company, but we have to underline this striking case. The personification is evoked as such in the plays by the supposts, but is also embodied in the parade just as Present Times is present in the march of 1568; it even seems to have had a ritual function in the activities of the joyful company of the printers, outside the parade (although we do not know what this function could be, since there are no surviving internal records of the company that could describe the activities and the role of its different members). As such, the personification of the printing press functions on three levels: literary (play), performative (parade) and ritual (activities of the Compagnie de la Coquille).

32 Another, earlier instance of parade and play performed in Lyon in 1541 gives a similar example of this combination of medieval and Renaissance rhetorical devices, albeit in a school play written by the humanist Barthélemy Aneau. See Doudet E., "Pédagogie de l'énigme, *Le Lyon Marchant* de Barthélemy Aneau (1541)", *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales et Humanistes* 22 (2011) 395–411.

33 Paxson, *The Poetics of Personification*, 36–38.

34 Bouhaïk-Gironès – Koopmans – Lavéant, *Recueil des sotties* 1, 390, ll. 56–60; 42, ll. 69–72; 413, ll. 69–72.

35 *Chevauchée*, 1566, 28–29, fols. D2v–D3.

In the play of 1568, she is invoked as a tutelary figure, able to give joy to the members of the joyful company, as they call for her to contain the negative influence of Atropos and Satan.³⁶ In the *sottie* of 1584, in which one of the important topics is the economic rivalry between the printers of Lyon and of Geneva, she is glorified for her power in a sonnet at the beginning of the booklet: without the printing press (especially in Lyon), it would be impossible to spread any texts, hence any literature, poetry, philosophy, etc.

In the *sotties* of 1601 and 1610, the personification gradually reaches the status of a revered entity, close to the gods. Mistress of an 'art', Lady Printing Press is described as 'learned' (she is called 'docte' several times),³⁷ and can even deliver oracles, just like the Pythia of Delphi:

This is the very learned Printing Press
Who will receive from the Pythia
The tripod of Apollo
Thanks to an oracle from Delphi,
And will deliver through a riddle
An oracle of very high importance.³⁸

In this case, she announces the reign of a new French King, Louis (the future Louis XIII), who will be able to restore Christianity in the Middle East (already a topic evoked in 1601).³⁹

In these two *sotties*, 1601 and 1610, Lady Printing Press is given a new name, Typosine, the so-called Muse of Print. This muse seems to appear for the first time in a series of poems by Jacques Grévin, in 1560. In his *Gélodacrye*, the poet reveals the secret of the existence of this tenth Muse, unknown (and for good reasons!) until now.⁴⁰ In this, he follows Du Bellay, who evoked the printing press as a tenth muse, without giving her a name, in his *Defense et illustration de la langue française*.⁴¹ This literary creation does not seem to have inspired later authors; in fact, as far as I am aware, Typosine does not reappear until the

36 Bouhaïk-Gironès – Koopmans – Lavéant, *Recueil des sotties* 1, 437–438, ll. 116–125.

37 Ibid. 594, l. 322; 605, l. 23; 616, ll. 264; 623, l. 404.

38 'C'est la tresdocte Imprimerie / Qui doit recevoir de Pythie / Le trepier apollonien / Par un oracle delphien, / En proposant sous un enigme / Quelque oracle de grand estime'. Ibid. 616–617, ll. 264–269.

39 Ibid. 587, ll. 149–158.

40 Grévin Jacques, *Gélodacrye* in *L'Olimpe de Jacques Grévin, de Clermont en Beauvaisis. Ensemble les autres euvres poétiques dudit auteur* (Paris, Robert II Estienne: 1560).

41 Du Bellay Joachim, *Deffense et illustration de la langue françoise* (Paris, Arnoul l'Angelier: 1549), chapter IX.

Lyon *sotties* some forty years later. In 1601, she is referred to for the first time as such: the printers refer to her as their mother, and describe how Vulcan used his skills to create typographic characters.⁴²

Unfortunately, neither the text nor the paratext of the plays describe the appearance of Typosine precisely. However, a woodcut used in several editions of the *sotties*, including the 1610 edition, represents the symbolic attributes of the personification [Fig. 8.2]. In classical dress and winged, she stands on a skull and on what seems to be a terrestrial globe. She holds several books under her arm as well as an hourglass. On her forehead and above her head is written the word 'God' in Latin, Greek and Hebrew. The image also shows a scallop shell, the symbol of the joyful company of printers, as well as two vignettes representing a typographer composing a text (left) and a two craftsmen working with a printing press (right).

The emphasis on the activity of the printers is not surprising. The references to God as well as death could be read as praise of the printing press as a divine gift to humans to fight against the passing of time that destroys their words, thanks to the printed texts that allow their survival. This is certainly how both Grevin in his poems and the printers in their *sotties* want to insist on the essential role of Typosine for the arts.

However, in the last surviving *sottie*, composed in 1610, Typosine is also made to speak on more political matters. In this play, the 'supposts' meet again after ten years of silence. They start by evoking the return of peace and prosperity thanks to king Henri IV, and especially the end of the religious conflicts that divided the country. In the second part of the play, they describe wagons on which a series of figures are standing (Nobility, the son of the king, Janus, the Pythia, etc.), before concluding, in the traditional way, that such a lengthy description has made them thirsty and that it is time to go drinking and banqueting. Typosine herself comes on stage, after the 'supposts' have described her prophetic status, in order to glorify the Dauphin, the son of Henri IV and future Louis XIII, in a song.⁴³ It is striking that this play in particular is obviously a text that accompanies and comments on a parade in which allegorical figures as well as symbolic tableaux vivants are presented. One can imagine what these tableaux vivants on wagons could look like from this description of a figure of the Dauphin (represented by a real eight-year-old or by a puppet?), between two nymphs:

42 Bouhaïk-Gironès – Koopmans – Lavéant, *Recueil des sotties* 1, 594, ll. 325–338.

43 Ibid. 623–624, 428–459.



FIGURE 8.2 *The Printing Press/Typosine on the title page of the Colloque des trois supposts (Lyon, printer unknown: 1610). Lyon, Municipal library, BM Rés. 316454.*

IMAGE © MUNICIPAL LIBRARY, LYON.

This one holding a sword in his hand
 Is representing the Dauphin.
 This nymph wearing a crown
 Shows us France,
 With the sceptre of glory
 And the laurel wreath of victory;
 The other nymph is representing
 Nobility, strong and powerful (...)⁴⁴

The 'supposts' describe Typosine as they see her, passing along on a wagon, like all the other figures in the parade.⁴⁵ The difference between Typosine and the other figures in the parade is that this personification also comes on stage later in the play. Thus, while slightly modifying the tradition of the *sottie* as a dialogue between the three 'supposts' by introducing a new character on stage, the author clearly wanted to go back to the original setting of the earlier *sotties*, in which the summoning and the parade of the joyful companies through the streets of the city was a central element in structuring the play. Nevertheless, despite this traditional setting, the last two plays of the series insist less on the entertainment of the parade, and more on the political message it has to convey. In 1601 and 1610, the plays are much longer than the previous ones,⁴⁶ and they insist heavily on the pacifying action of Henri IV, the future role of his son, and the importance of the governors of Lyon who secure public order. It is clear that the joyful company of the printers considered themselves able to contribute to the public debate on the importance of civil peace and the authority of the King and his representatives, thanks to the staging and printing of these *sotties*. The references to the printing press, and even her appearance as a character on stage in the last *sottie*, are thus to be seen as components of an obvious metapoetic reflexion. The printers deliver a clear message on the role the printing press (and therefore they too) may play as a tool to spread the news of the good deeds of the king, and thus contribute to maintaining and enhancing social peace inside and outside the city. The decision to have Lady Printing Press come on stage and to give her a voice through the song she sings

44 'Celuy qui tient l'espee en main / Nous represente le Daufin. / Par cette nymphe coronee / La France nous est demonstree, / Ayant le sceptre glorieux / Et le laurier victorieux; / L'autre nymphe nous represente / La Noblesse forte et puissante (...). Bouhaïk-Gironès – Koopmans – Lavéant, *Recueil des sotties* I, 616–621, ll. 243–251.

45 Bouhaïk-Gironès – Koopmans – Lavéant, *Recueil des sotties* I, 616–621, ll. 240–355.

46 439 lines in 1601 and up to 711 lines in 1610, versus 100 to 200 lines in most of the other *sotties*, except 1594: almost 300 lines.

is therefore a way of reinforcing their message, by giving a substance to their trade, their corporation and indeed their identity via the personification.

Through the heavy use of references to Greek and Latin mythology and Antiquity, as well as the choice of topics and themes that forsake the relative freedom of tone of the medieval *sottie* to insist on the supremacy of royal power, the last play of the corpus, in 1610, clearly illustrates a shift in writing. Nevertheless, the author still chooses to conclude in the very traditional way all these *sotties* (and many others before) were concluded, with the departure of the characters looking for wine to celebrate, and with a quotation in local Lyon dialect:

On an old, antique medal,
A relic of the past,
Are written these words in Lyon dialect:
'The Printing Press and her servants
Will make me live ten more years'.⁴⁷

It is not clear to whom Lady Printing Press gives such longevity. These lines may be interpreted as claiming that this play, by being printed after the performance, will survive and be available for readers long after the festival for which it was written. In any case, they make a direct reference to the earlier *sotties*, since the fourth play performed in 1566 was written entirely in Lyon dialect.⁴⁸

Very clearly, far from denying the tradition these *sotties* stem from, the author of the 1610 play inscribed his text in that tradition, linking the old with the new, the local with the national. He thus reaffirmed the very special link between the theatrical activities of Lyon's joyful and performative culture, the printers and their positioning in public debate on contemporary issues, over a long period. His insertion of the personification into the play and in the context of the parade also connects with earlier uses of this figure, such as in the play and parade of 1568. By giving them a special status in this spectacle, the printers managed, throughout the second half of the sixteenth century, to maintain a tradition of allegorical reading by the spectators of the plays according to the medieval performative tradition. Yet they also created an original use of the figure that connected the theatrical performance of the play with the larger context of the parade, involving the different actors of this parade (actors in

47 'Une vieille antique medaille, / Des ans l'ancienne anticaille, / En lyonnois dit ces propos: / "Los Imprimu et los Suppos / Me faran encour dix an vivre"' Bouhaïk-Gironès – Koopmans – Lavéant, *Recueil des sotties* 1, 635, ll.704–708.

48 Bouhaïk-Gironès – Koopmans – Lavéant, *Recueil des sotties* 1, 417–425.

the plays, members of the joyful companies parading on the streets, and all spectators of these festivities) around personifications that enjoyed a real presence on and close to the stage, while still retaining a strong abstract, polysemic signification.

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Personification in Sir David Lyndsay's *A Satire of the Three Estates*

Greg Walker

Outside its native Scotland, Sir David Lyndsay's monumental religious, social, and political drama, *A Satire of the Three Estates*, is little known and rarely, if ever, performed. Even within Scotland it is less well known than it should be. For, despite being regularly revived on the Scottish stage since its 'rediscovery' by the director Tyrone Guthrie for the Edinburgh International Festival of 1948, it was not performed professionally in its entirety between 1554 and 2013. This omission, while understandable (see below) is deeply regrettable, for the play is an extraordinary work, considerably more radical in both its political content and its dramaturgy—not least in its treatment of personification allegory—than most other British drama of the sixteenth century, anticipating and nuancing dramatic effects that would not be attempted again until the twentieth century. As I shall argue, it explores the limitations of personification allegory as a vehicle for exploring social and political issues in the world beyond the royal court and offers a model of a new form of dramatic engagement with those issues grounded both on the staged disruption of allegory by figures supposedly beyond the sphere of the play and the opening up of the dramatic action to include the audience itself.

Origins

Growing out of a shorter interlude played before King James v at Linlithgow Palace in 1540, the full play was performed, so far as we know, only twice in the sixteenth century, once in Lyndsay's home town of Cupar, in Fife, in 1552, and then on the Greenside in Edinburgh in 1554. The Edinburgh event reputedly lasted for nine hours. The text itself is over 4,600 lines in length, containing bawdy scenes, scatological and sexual language, lengthy political and moral speeches, two sermons (the first 'straight', the second a parodic *sermon joyeux* delivered by a personification of Folly), the recital of fifteen substantial Acts of Parliament, no fewer than three public hangings, and the timed release of a trained crow or raven. Perhaps understandably, the modern commercial

theatre has been reluctant to invest the resources necessary to do full justice to so ambitious and demanding a play, relying instead upon variations on the much shorter, sanitised script produced for Guthrie's production by the writer Robert Kemp.¹ Yet it is only when performed in its entirety that the play's radicalism, both socio-political and dramaturgical, becomes fully evident, as I discovered recently as part of the team that was able to stage the full play in the grounds of Linlithgow Palace in June 2013, thanks to a research grant from the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council.²

The process of rehearsing and staging the *Satire* with a company of professional actors directed by Gregory Thompson revealed time and again just how carefully and tightly constructed it was as a piece of theatre, despite its apparently sprawling length and scope, and just how daringly innovative. Throughout the play Lyndsay demonstrates a remarkable familiarity with the tropes and conventions of the English and Continental allegorical drama.³ And he displays an equally remarkable pleasure, once he has alluded to those conventions, in breaking them, repeatedly and flamboyantly. Most strikingly, perhaps, he revitalises what might have become the rather predictable convention of having a character enter the action seemingly from among the audience, not once but many times:⁴ having a Tailor and a Shoemaker (*Sowtar*) speak from among the crowd in answer to questions from the stage (ll. 3144–3159),⁵ inviting the Shoemaker and his Wife onstage to take part in a blasphemous mock divorce ceremony orchestrated by a corrupt Pardoner (ll. 2129–2186), and most strikingly and significantly (as we shall see) having what appears to be an

1 Greg Walker, "Reflections on Staging Sir David Lyndsay's *Satire of the Three Estates* at Linlithgow Palace, June 2013", *Scottish Literary Review* 5 (2013) 1–22.

2 The project team were myself, Professor Thomas Betteridge (Brunel University) and Dr Eleanor Rycroft (now of the University of Bristol), with the help of Dr Sally Rush (Glasgow), Dr Sarah Carpenter (Edinburgh), Professor John J. McGavin (Southampton) and Professor Ann Gray (Lincoln). Our collaborators were AandBC Theatre Company, directed by Gregory Thompson, and Historic Scotland, in whose keeping are Linlithgow Palace and Stirling Castle. For further information about this project, and film of the production, see the 'Staging and Representing the Scottish Renaissance Court' project website at <http://www.stagingthescottishcourt.org/>.

3 Carpenter S., "The Politics of Unreason: *Ane Satire of the Thrie Estaitis* and the Practice of Folly", *Theta* 10 (2013) 35–52; Mill A.J., "The Influence of Continental Drama on Lyndsay's *Satire of the Thrie Estaitis*", *Modern Language Review* 25 (1930), 425–442; Happé P., "Staging Folly in the Early Sixteenth Century: Heywood, Lindsay, and Others", in Davidson C. (ed.), *Fools and Folly* (Kalamazoo: 1996) 73–111.

4 See, for example, Henry Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucrece*; and John Heywood's *Play of the Weather*, in Walker G. (ed.), *Medieval Drama: An Anthology* (Oxford: 2000).

5 All references to the play are to the text in Walker, *Medieval Drama*.

indigent beggar, Pauper, circulate through the audience begging for alms at a point when the performance seems to have paused for an interval (ll. 1934–2043), before stepping fully into the action in the second half.

More mischievously, Lyndsay has the personification of Diligence, his own dramatic surrogate, begin proceedings with a stock apology for the players' intentions, assuring the audience both that the play will be short and that no one should take offence at what will be an entirely abstract and impersonal critique, eschewing any trace of *ad hominem* satire.

Als I beseik yow famous auditouris,
 Conveinit in this congregatioun,
 To be patient the space of certaine houris,
 Till ye have hard our short narratioun.
 And als we make yow supplicatioun
 That na man tak our wordis intill disdaine,
 Althocht ye hear be declamatioun
 The common weill richt pitiouslie complaine.
 [...]
 Prudent peopill, I pray yow all,
 Tak na man greif in speciall,
 For wee sall speik in general
 For pastyme and for play. (ll. 54–61, 70–73)⁶

Such protestations, frequently encountered in the English drama and verse of the period, are often little more than fig-leaves to cover an intention to touch on issues of quite specific topical concern, of course.⁷ But Lyndsay subsequently flouts the 'no man have I named' principle with such bravado that by the end of the play there would have been virtually nobody in the original Cupar audience who had not been singled out for 'greif in speciall' and particular *ad hominem* attention. The corrupt pardoner's servant, Little Willy Gallows-bird (*Wilkin*

6 'I beseech you, noble listeners, / Gathered here in this crowd, / To be patient for some hours / Until you have heard our brief narration. / And we also beg you / that no one be aggrieved at our words, / Even though you will hear / The commonwealth protest full pitifully. [...] Prudent people, I pray you all, / No one should take personal offence [at what follows] / For we shall speak only in general terms / For your entertainment and pleasure.'

7 For variations on this trope, see Henry Medwall, *Fulgens and Lucrece*, ll. 154–160, 175–181; Nicholas Udall, *Respublica* (1553), ll. 6–14; and Richard Edwards, *Damon and Pytheas* (1579), ll. 39–42. For its most succinct summation, see John Skelton's poem, *Colin Clout* (c. 1522) ll. 1111–1112, 'For no man have I named; / Wherefore should I be blamed?'. Skelton John, *The Complete English Poems*, ed. J. Scattergood (Harmondsworth: 1983).

Widdiefowl), says that he can find lodgings (and by implication sexual favours) from a local woman, 'good, kind Christian Anderson' (l. 2212), while the vices Theft (*Thift*), Falsehood (*Falset*), and Deceit (*Dissait*) identify among their followers whole swathes of border society as well as families and individuals from the local Cupar community whom they claim have put what the play terms 'singular profit' (the interests of the individual or group) above those of the commonwealth as a whole. They name specifically the Grocers, Nixons, Bells, Robsons, Hawes, Piles, Littles, Trimbles, Armstrongs, Taylors, Irwins, Elwands, and the Grahams of Ewesdale (ll. 4030–4038), 'the great clan Jamesone, / The blude [blood] royal of Cupar toun' (ll. 4094–4095), the Andersons and Pattersons, Lucklands, Wellands, Carruthers, and Douglasses, the Cupar burgess Tom Williamson, the tailors Andrew Fortune (l. 4154) and Tailyeour Baberage (l. 4157), 'the barfut [barefoot] deacon, Jamie Ralfe' (l. 4160), Willie Cadyeoch (l. 4163), the Cupar brewers, and Geordie Sillie (l. 4184). The point being made is that everyone present has been complicit in the corruption that the play condemns, and needs to acknowledge that fact, both in their own consciences and publically among their neighbours, as part of a collective will to reform.

Equally mischievous is the use Lyndsay makes of the place-and-scaffold staging familiar from plays such as the fifteenth-century English morality *The Castle of Perseverance*.⁸ Like the *Castle*, which had scaffolds for God, the Devil, the Flesh, and Covetousness, the *Satire* uses 'seats' or houses as the bases for a number of its major personifications. Sensuality has one, for example, Spirituality another, and Good Counsel a third. Yet the scaffolds, constructed at significant expense, are used only sparingly in the second half of the play, and become largely redundant when the attention shifts to the Parliament stage. The architecture of Scottish civil society thus stands largely abandoned and redundant through most of the play: and that may well have been the satirical point.

More pointedly, Lyndsay makes prominent use of a 'stank' or water-filled ditch in the playing space, as did the *Castle*, with its 'watyr a bowte [th]e place'.⁹ But, having drawn attention to so symbolically significant a barrier between one part of the space and another, he proceeds to put it to largely bathetic, comic use. The Shoemaker's Wife, having feared that she will have her toes bitten by the toads ('paddockes') in the ditch, or even drown in it, quickly discovers that it is too shallow to offer any threat. 'Cummer [friend], I will nocht drown mysell!' (l. 1392), she announces, and wades off triumphantly through the water. And, with a still more cavalier disregard for conventional symbolism,

8 Eccles M., (ed.), *The Macro Plays* (Oxford: 1969) 1–111.

9 See the stage diagram in Eccles, *The Macro Plays*.

the play has John the Commonweal 'jump' ('loup') over the ditch to reach the parliament, only to add a laconic stage direction indicating that it does not matter whether he manages to or not ('Here sall Johne loup the stank or els fall in it'; stage direction following l. 2437).

All of this is part of a more general dramatic strategy in which Lyndsay provides in the first part of the *Satire* a beautifully crafted example of a moral play in the English allegorical tradition, only to stand it, and the principles underpinning it, on their heads in the second. Pamela King offers a succinct summary of the general principles underlying the Morality form in its English incarnation:

What these plays have in common most obviously is that they offer their audiences moral instruction through dramatic action that is broadly allegorical. Hence they are set in no time, or outside historical time, though their lack of historical specificity is generally exploited by strategically collapsing the eternal with the contemporary. The protagonist is generally a figure for all men, reflected in his name, Everyman or Mankind, and the other characters are polarised as figures of good and evil. The action concerns alienation from God and return to God, presented as the temptation, fall and restitution of the protagonist.¹⁰

The first half of Lyndsay's *Satire* offers an exemplary version of just such a play. A central allegorical protagonist, Rex Humanitas, a young, naïve king, falls under the spell of a series of ever-more culpable personified vices [Fig. 9.1]: first the companions of youth: Wantonness, Placebo, and Solace, then Sensuality and her attendant ladies, Hameliness and Danger, and finally the greater vices, Flattery, Falsehood, and Deceit. Only the arrival of a literal *deus ex machina*, in the form of Divine Correction, scatters the vices, reconciles Rex with the virtues, Good Counsel, Chastity, and Verity, and disciplines the vices of youth to virtuous use. But, having brought this elegant personification allegory to a suitable emblematic conclusion in a tableau of right rule, both personal and political, leaving Rex surrounded by figures who personify both moral principles and personal qualities, it is as if the playwright then turns to the audience and says: 'So much for the platitudes of moral drama; how might we actually make for a better society in the real world? Having fashioned a virtuous king, what

¹⁰ King P.M., "Morality Plays", in Beadle R. – Fletcher A.J. (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre*, second edition (Cambridge: 2008) 235–262, here 235. For the *Satire* and the English Morality tradition, see Kantrowitz J.S., *Dramatic Allegory: Lindsay's Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* (Lincoln, NA: 1975) 105–146.



FIGURE 9.1 *Rex Humanitas* (James Mackenzie) surrounded by vices (clockwise from bottom left, Annie Grace, Jimmy Chisholm, Stephen Docherty, and Barrie Hunter) in the 2013 production of *The Three Estates*.

COURTESY OF HISTORIC SCOTLAND.

should such a king actually do, here and now, in Scotland?'.¹¹ And, to answer that question he starts the play over again in Part Two, approaching the same problems that he had described in Part One through personification allegory (corruption and self-interest at all levels of society, the failure of good governance, and the economic and moral poverty of the community) in the far more concrete terms of social, economic, and political action in a world which is recognisably contemporary Scotland.¹²

From Allegory to Allegation: The Dangers of Mediation

The move from abstraction and personification to the representation of specific individuals and issues mirrors the play's concern for real political and

11 For the suggestion that '[t]he use of prosopopoeia, or personification, in creating dramatic characters involves a fundamental separation between the play world and the real world'; see King, "Morality Plays" 236.

12 For Lyndsay's dramaturgy, see Walker G., *Reading Literature Historically: Drama and Poetry from Chaucer to the Reformation* (Edinburgh: 2013) 63–90.

social engagement, so much so that the two themes, dramatic verisimilitude and political action, become two aspects of the same strategy. And each reflects an apparent distrust of agents of mediation, whether they be actors presenting allegorical figures or institutions and groups that profit by taking on functions properly performed by others.

In political terms, Lyndsay displays throughout the play a concern to expel from the commonwealth unprofitable middle men, agents, and intermediaries: those individuals, classes, and professions who have found a comfortable niche in society by interposing themselves between those whose responsibility it is to support, instruct, and protect the people and the people themselves. Hence in spiritual matters it is the friars who come in for the severest criticism. For, the play asserts, by convincing the bishops that they do not need to read the Bible or to preach themselves, as friars can do that for them, the latter have reduced the episcopacy to a self-interested, unproductive landholding class with little spiritual purpose or vocation. Consequently, the illiterate common people have been denied the honest preaching and instruction necessary to strengthen their faith and assist in their salvation. Similarly the friars have convinced good wives across the land that a gift to them, the friars, will be more effective in securing their salvation than attending sermons or performing the good works that should be an active element of their faith. Thus it is the friars, and not the bishops or monks, who are formally expelled from the realm *en masse* with the nuns by Correction towards the close of the play, despite John the Commonweal and Pauper's palpable fury at all levels of the church hierarchy.

Similarly, in the secular sphere, it is the middle men between the landowning aristocracy and the land-working tenant farmers who are identified as the principal source of the poor cottars' woes. The new *plague* of feuing identified by Good Counsel—'And now begins ane plague amang them new, / That gentill men thair steadings taks in few'; ll. 2579–2580)—and condemned by Correction is thus not the practice of feuing itself (a form of land holding that gave tenants security of heritable tenure in return for an entry fine, rent payments, and annual 'augmentation' fees),¹³ but the landowners' willingness to grant their lands in feu to a 'rentier' class of 'jinking [deceitful / work-shy] gentlemen'. The latter do not farm the land, but lease it on in turn to the working farmers, steadily raising the augmentations to ensure their own 'singular profit' at the labouring man's expense. Correction's solution to this 'plague' is thus not to abolish the feu, but to insist that Temporality,

13 For the feu system, see Sanderson M.H.B., *Scottish Rural Society in the Sixteenth Century* (Edinburgh: 1982).

Set into few [*feu*] your temporall lands
 To men that labours with thair hands,
 Bot nocht to ane g[*in*]king gentill man,
 That nether will he wirk, nor can,
 Quhair throch the policy may increse. (ll. 2690–2694)¹⁴

Again, it is the middle men who are to be removed from the equation, here in order to (re)establish the romantic ideal of a direct bond between rulers and ruled, the aristocracy and the common people, as the backbone of the healthy commonwealth. Hence the Acts of the Estates, formally recited towards the end of the play, declare again that,

And als the Common-weil for til advance,
 It is statute that all the temporall lands
 Be set in few, efter the forme of France,
 Till verteuous men that labours with thair hands:
 Resonabilie restrictit with sic bands
 That they do service nevertheless,
 And to be subject ay under the wands,
 That riches may with policie increse. (ll. 3839–3846)¹⁵

Intriguingly, however, it is not only the friars and profit-hungry gentry who are criticised in this way. For, among the other middle-men in the long list of 'strang beggars' and idle men denounced by John the Commonweal are artists and entertainers, especially those who, like Lyndsay himself, find their employment in the households of lords and lairds. John attacks the,

Fidlers, pypers, and pardoners,
 Thir jugglars, jestars, and idill cuitchours,
 Thir carriers and thir quintacensours,
 Thir babil-beirers and thir bairds,

14 'Set your temporal lands into feu / For [the benefit of authentic] manual labourers, / Not to deceitful [or work-shy] gentlemen / That are neither willing nor able to work, / And thereby good governance will grow'. The point is reinforced by the Merchant in similar terms at ll. 2810–2818.

15 'And also in order to improve the common good, / It is enacted here that all temporal estates / Be set in feu, in the way they are in France, / To good men who labour manually, / Bound reasonably with such contracts / That they serve [their king] in all things / And subject to [good] authority, / So that wealth and good governance may grow'.

Thir sweir swyngeours with lords and lairds
 Ma then thair rents may susteine,
 Or to thair profite neidfull bene,
 Quhillk bene ay blythest of discords,
 And deidly feid amang thar lords.
 For then they sleutchers man be treatit,
 Or els thair querrels undebaitit. (ll. 2609–2619)¹⁶

The particular vice that unites this seemingly disparate group is that all of them consume and waste resources that would otherwise sustain the commonwealth. But, more specifically, just as pardoners interpose themselves between gullible folk and true confession, offering to sell remission from purgatory rather than encouraging true contrition—and thus alienating folk from God—so the fools and bards specifically encourage feuds between their noble employers, as it is in times of discord that lords need them most, to celebrate their achievements and ridicule their rivals. Thus the middle men dictate the agenda, making themselves essential elements in a culture of corrupt mediation. The tail wags the dog, and the commonwealth suffers.

It is initially unsettling to find a court playwright such as Lyndsay placing so clear-cut and vehement a condemnation of courtly entertainment in the mouth of one of his virtuous characters. But it is important to note that the play explores a number of attitudes to the role of entertainment, and pastime in general, in the course of its 4,600 lines. Rather than taking sides in the anti-theatrical debate, Lyndsay is careful instead to stage its rival views,¹⁷ placing a more measured defence of courtly pastime in the mouth of Divine Correction at the end of Part One that balances John's later tirade. Solace, the embodiment of merriment, promises that,

Sir, wee sall mend our condition,
 Sa ye give us remission,
 Bot give us live to sing:

16 'Fiddlers, pipers, and jugglers, / Along with these jesters, jugglers, and idle gamblers, / These sycophants and alchemists, / These fools and bards, / These bold rogues [who serve] with lords and lairds / In greater numbers than [the lords'] incomes can support, / And more than can be at all useful to them. / [These bards] are happiest during times of discord / And feuds between their lords, / Because then they [the bards] are cosseted by the lords [as it is they who celebrate the lord's victories and defy their rivals in flytings], / For otherwise their side of the arguments will not be recorded.'

17 I owe this point to my colleague, Professor Olga Taxidou.

To dance, to play at chesse and tabils,
 To reid stories and mirrie fabils,
 For pleasure of our king. (ll. 1841–1846)¹⁸

In return Correction agrees to pardon Solace and his fellow courtly vices, 'So long as you commit no other offences' ('sa that ye do na uther crime'; l. 1847),

For quhy, as I suppois,
 Princes may sumtyme seik solace
 With mirth and lawfull mirrines,
 Thair spirits to rejoyis. (ll. 1849–1852)¹⁹

He even adds hawking, hunting, jousting, and running at the ring to the list of permissible pastimes (ll. 1853–1858).

Thus the real merit of 'lawful merriness' is finally left undecided. Its value for ameliorating life in a fallen world is acknowledged, but its dangers, and the costs it brings with it in a world of scarce resources and easily distracted human spectators is similarly recognised. What the play does signal clearly is that merriness, and especially the kind of solace that drama offers as a medium for moral and political counsel, is always potentially problematic. It too can become an intrusive intermediary between the transmission and reception of ideas, threatening to corrupt the 'message' in transit in pursuit of its own agenda and 'singular profit'. Hence perhaps Lyndsay's final dissatisfaction with the traditional modes of allegorical personification drama, which always threaten to translate political issues into symbolic moral ones, and to offer the aesthetic satisfactions of witnessing a well-made play in lieu of a spur for action in the world. Like the author of the anonymous fifteenth-century English critique of religious drama, *The Tretise of Miraclis Pleyinge*, who condemned the cycle plays for distracting their audiences from true spiritual repentance by generating merely 'fleshly' outward concern for the feigned sufferings of the actor playing Christ,²⁰ the playwright embodied his own critique of a merely vicarious, allegorical resolution to real problems in the *Satire*.

18 'Sir, we shall amend our behaviour / If only you will show us mercy. / Give us permission to sing, / Dance, to play chess and backgammon, / Read stories and merry tales / To entertain the king'.

19 'Because, as I know, / Princes may sometimes seek solace, / Along with entertainment and legitimate pleasures / To raise their spirits'.

20 Walker, *Medieval Drama* 196–200.

We see this issue played out in Part One of the play, where very real anxieties about the legal and political foundations of good governance in Scotland are, as we have seen, translated into a drama about the moral failings of a young king. Once Rex is instructed by Correction to accept Good Counsel, Verity, and Chastity into his service, his own personal failings are corrected and the realm is, by implication, restored to health. The first half of the *Satire* thus ends on a pleasing note of reconciliation and equipoise. But the aesthetic consolations of watching a series of personified vices purged from the stage and a young man seemingly come to experience, cannot provide a realistic spur to the political action necessary to address the concrete social and economic ills that troubled Lyndsay. Indeed, the displacement of the political into the aesthetic is more likely to have the contrary effect. If the issues at stake are the nature of land-tenure, an allegedly unjust tax system, a prolix and corrupt legal establishment, cattle theft, and commercial malpractice, then the symbolic maturing of a player-prince from hedonism to wisdom can only gesture towards their solution. Hence the reinvention of the dramatic terms of engagement in Part Two, in which the focus shifts from Rex Humanitas and his personality to the gathering of the Three Estates, whose entry to the field, 'walking backwards' ('gagand backward'; stage direction following l. 2322) is a powerful indication of how far Scotland remains a world turned upside down, and a reminder of the scope of the reforming work still to be done. And in the second half, the play moves from action which is 'broadly allegorical' to that which is specific and verisimilitudinous, and from the historically unspecific to a discourse rooted in the particularities of Scottish history and geography and the problems of the present moment.²¹

Pauper and the Politics of Representation

In the figure of Pauper, the beggar who seemingly wanders into the play during the interval [Fig. 9.2], Lyndsay's desire to rid the world of middle men and intermediaries seems to find its dramaturgical equivalent. His name might suggest that he is merely another personification, designed to mediate between the audience and the concept of poverty in the real world. But he quickly reveals himself in practice to be something rather different. He is not an abstraction from social reality, a timeless representation of a concept or idea, but rather a poor man whose capacity to represent poverty is based upon a verisimilitudi-

21 Walker, *Reading Literature Historically* 63–90; Lyall R. (ed.), *The Thrie Estaitis* (Edinburgh: 1989) xi–xii.



FIGURE 9.2 *Pauper (David McKay) in the 2013 Linlithgow production of The Three Estates.*
COURTESY OF HISTORIC SCOTLAND.

nous evocation of poverty itself, itemized in painful quotidian detail. He has not always been poor, but has been brought to poverty by the ruthless exploitation of the rights and privileges of his landlord and vicar. He once sustained his whole family, his aged father, his mother, Maud, and his wife, Meg (the last two being the first characters with non-figurative names to appear in the play) and their children. He lives, not in an emblematic anywhere but on a small-holding 'ane mile fra Tranent' in Lothian, which he has had to abandon, and is now begging his way to the courts of St. Andrews 'to seek law'. At the root of his woes are the very real death duties (the 'heiralt' or heriot charge and the 'cors present beasts' or mortuary dues, paid in kind) that landlords and the clergy might exact from their tenants and parishioners on the death of a family member. Because that misery has struck his family with bitter frequency in the recent past, taking his parents and his wife in quick succession, Pauper has been forced to watch his landlord take his only horse and then his vicar take all three cows, one for each dead relative, along with their best items of clothing, leaving him and his children destitute.

Pauper's poverty is thus not emblematic but recognisably rooted in the social conditions of contemporary Scottish society. Unlike the misery of John the Commonweal, the other personification of the people in the play, it cannot be ended simply by the substitution of a 'gay garmoun' for his ragged tunic. His

poverty is more than skin deep. It is the direct result of real events (not least the depredations committed in the Tranent area by invading English troops in the past decade). And he remains as poor at the close of the play as he was at his entrance. He never gets his 'three fat ky [cows]' and his grey mare back. And his last words are an at best conditional approval of what the estates have done on his behalf, couched in a final dark threat of what will happen if they do not follow through on their promises.

I gif yow my braid bennessoun,
 That hes givin Common-weill a gown.
 I wald nocht for ane pair of plackis,
 Ye had nocht maid thir nobill Actis.
 I pray to God and sweit Sanct Geill
 To gif yow grace to use them weill:
 Wer thay weill keipit, I understand,
 It war great honour to Scotland.
It had bene als gude ye had sleipit
As to mak Acts and be nocht keipit. (ll. 3982–3991, my italics)²²

The radicalism of Pauper as both a dramatic device and a political statement is striking. There is nothing equivalent to this unflinching honesty in the depiction of the poor in the English drama of the sixteenth century. Remarkably, in a society based upon deference and hierarchy, there is no hint of condescension or mockery in the play's attitude towards him; no attempt to sanitise the extremity of his condition, or to render his anger or defiance palatable to authority, within or beyond the stage. He says openly that he does not give a sow's fart for the decorum of the play, and he shows equally little concern for political protocols; freely imagining how much better life would be for the common people were he the king, or even the Pope. British drama would not see another working class character with this kind of radical energy and invention until well into the twentieth century.²³

22 'I give my strongest blessing to you / Who have given John the Commonwealth a [parliamentary] robe, / And I wouldn't wish you had not made these acts, / Even [if you offered me] two four-penny coins. / I pray to God and sweet St. Giles / That He gives you the grace to use this legislation wisely: / For I believe that if these Acts are well observed / It will bring great honour to Scotland. / [But] it would be no better than if you slept / If you pass Acts and then do not observe them in practice'.

23 Walker G., "The Popular Voice in Sir David Lyndsay's *Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*", *Studies in Scottish Literature* 40 (2015) 39–54.

By introducing Pauper into the play when he does, and by doing so in ways that emphasise his verisimilitude (having him enter the playing field begging for alms from the audience, and at a moment when the other actors have left the stage, seemingly for an interval), Lyndsay thus combines a critique of the limitations of conventional moral drama with a striking appeal to spectators' hearts and minds over the conditions of the contemporary rural poor. Pauper's entry is the hinge around which the play swings from an allegorical drama, carefully constructed along conventional lines to chart the rise and fall of an everyman (or 'every-king') figure, to something seemingly less structured, more spontaneous and politically and aesthetically challenging. Rather than arguing over the symbolic fate of Rex, the characters reconvene in Part Two as advisors to Parliament. Rather than using eloquence and moral argument to sway the prince their way, and to vicariously instruct the audience in how to manage their own lives, the Estates battle among themselves to produce legislation to reform the canon and civil law courts, revise the tax system, the laws governing inheritance, marriage, and clerical office-holding and responsibilities. To reinforce the point that personification allegory can address real political issues only emblematically, the play dispenses with its allegorical structure altogether in Part Two, and seems at times to fragment entirely into a series of only loosely connected and undramatic recreations of the events and ceremonies of normal civil society: the reading out of all fifteen of the parliamentary Acts, the two sermons, the final confessions and executions of Theft, Falsehood, and Deceit: the last made all the more realistic by the stage direction's stipulation that the actor himself, 'and not his figure', should be hoisted up and a black bird released at the moment of death, as if it were his soul.

As I have argued elsewhere,²⁴ it is as if Lyndsay was trying to find in the experimentation of Part Two a new grammar and architecture for political drama, one that would draw from, but finally transcend the mechanisms of personification allegory and moral counsel that he had inherited from previous Scottish drama (now lost), and from work he may have encountered on his travels to England and France. And key to this rethinking of the form itself was the figure of Pauper. In finding room within the play for the representation of a poor man from outside it, Lyndsay redesigned the genre in ways that would, *inter alia*, point towards the birth of the History Play, a genre that could use didactic tropes but not be limited by them, from out of the Morality form. The roots of this dramatic innovation can be traced back to Lyndsay's earlier work as a court writer, and the earliest form of *The Satire* in 1540.

24 Walker, *Reading Literature Historically* 63–90.

The Origins of Pauper

The figure of the Pauper or poor man clearly held an abiding fascination and challenge for Lyndsay. It was central in that earlier incarnation of the *Satire* as an interlude for the court of James v, played in Linlithgow Palace on the feast of the Epiphany (6 January) 1540. In that production, another figure of righteously angry poverty (albeit one slightly more deferential in attitude) strode confidently into the courtly acting space, seemingly from outside, to put the case for the common man directly in the counsels of the great. We know of this performance only from a description provided for Henry VIII's chief minister, Thomas Cromwell, by the Captain of Berwick, Sir William Eure on the advice of the Scots reformer Thomas Bellenden. But it is clear from that account that the Poor Man played a very similar role in the Interlude to that which Pauper would play in the *Satire* of 1552 and 1554. The description tells us that the interlude began with some comic interaction between a group of boastful courtiers, but this quickly made way for the arrival of the Three Estates: a Man at Arms (representing the temporal lords), a Bishop (the spiritual peers), and a Burgess, accompanied by Experience, clad like a doctor:

After thayme come a Poor Man, whoe did goe uppe and downe the scaffold, making a hevie complaynte, that he was heried throughe the courtiers taking his fewe in one place, and alsoe his tackes in an other place, wher thoughte he hade s[k]ailed his house, his wife and childeren beggyngh their brede, and soe of many thousaund in Scotlande, whiche wolde make the Kynges Grace lose of men if His Grace stod neide.²⁵

The appearance of the Poor Man was a direct appeal to James v himself, one aspect of whose carefully constructed royal persona was the claim to be 'the poor man's king', a sovereign both attentive and responsive to the needs of the common people. James was evidently keen to promote this image in both general and practical terms. Thus, among the elaborate iconography of the statuary on the walls of Stirling Castle, redesigned during James' reign as perhaps his principal palace of residence, there is, nestled between the classical and

25 'After them came a Poor Man, who walked up and down the scaffold making a sorrowful complaint, [saying] that he was harried through the courtiers taking his feus in one place, and his taxes in another place, whereby he had been forced to break up his household, his wife and child left begging for bread, just as many a thousand more in Scotland were, which would leave the king short of strong men [for his armies] when he needed them'. For the description and Eure's letter, see Walker, *Medieval Drama* 538–540.

allegorical figures of Jupiter, Venus, Wisdom and sexual temptation, not only a striking representation of Folly (another character who would play a significant role in Lyndsay's *Satire*), but a conspicuously lifelike figure of a poor man on the south-facing wall of the king's own house. Helena M. Shire does eloquent justice to its visual impact in her description of the iconography of the palace more generally:

[O]n his own short column sits patiently a figure that I find as moving as any in the palace scheme—an old man with a bag over his shoulder, poorly dressed. Is this the 'poor man' of 'the poor man's king'? Is his inclusion gratuitous to the scheme of soldiery, or is he eloquently in place—'the poor man pays for all'? He is certainly poverty, patience and resignation personified, here directly depicted not expressed via an allegorical abstraction.²⁶

James had also taken more practical steps to provide assistance to the poor. In 1535 he had instructed the Lords of Council to appoint a lawyer 'of good conscience [...] quhilk shall be called advocatus pauperum' to plead for poor suitors in court, on an annual salary of £10. And in the early years of its existence the court of Session had heard several cases brought by 'puir [poor] tenants' against their social superiors.²⁷

A willingness to appear as a monarch attentive to the needs of his poorest subjects was thus an important part of James's personal and public image. And it could have very practical advantages when it came to political negotiations. The intrusion of the Poor Man in Lyndsay's Interlude was a clear example of this. For his plea for reform of the church evidently played directly into James's political agenda, denouncing the venality, rapacity, and immorality of the clergy in a way that cued the king (who clearly knew what was going to be said and had prepared his response) to turn to the Archbishop of Glasgow and his senior clergy and press them to take action to address the Poor Man's claims. William Eure's account of the Interlude describes their exchange:

26 Shire H.M., "The King in his House: Three Architectural Artefacts belonging to the Reign of James V", in Hadley Williams J. (ed.), *Stewart Style, 1513–1542: Essays on the Court of James V* (East Linton: 1996) 62–96, here 75–76.

27 Edington C., *Court and Culture in Renaissance Scotland: Sir David Lindsay of the Mount* (Amherst: 1994) 135; Cameron J., *James V: The Personal Rule, 1528–1542* (East Linton: 1998) 2–3.

My lorde, the same Mr Bellendyn shewed me that after the said enterluyd fynished, the King of Scotts dide call upon the Busshope of Glascoe being Chauncelour, and diverse other busshops, exorting thaym to reform thair facions and maners of lyving, saying that oneles thay soe did, he wold sende sex of the proudeste of thaym unto his uncle of England, and, as thoes wer ordoured, soe he wold ordour all the reste that wolde not a mende. And therunto the Chauncelour shuld aunswer, and say unto the King that one worde of His Graces mouthe shuld suffice thayme to be at commaundement, and the King haistely and angrely aunswered that he wold gladly bestowe any words of his mouthe that could a mend thaym. I am alsoe advertised by the same Mr Bellendyn that the King of Scottes is fully mynded to expell all sprituall men from having any auctoritie by office under His Grace, either in household or elles-where within the Realme, and daily studiethe and devisithe for that entente (...)²⁸

The Poor Man had already set up that shift from play-politics to courtly *realpolitik* with a conspicuous gesture at the start of the Interlude, shifting the audience's attention from the player-king to James himself with a comment that was at once both a deferential nod to the real authority in the hall and a bold piece of political counsel.

he [the Poor Man] spered [*asked*] for the king, and when he was showed to the man that was king in the playe, he aunswered and said he was noe king, ffor ther is but one king, whiche made all and governethe all, Whoe is eternall, to Whome he and all erthely kinges ar but officers, of the whiche thay muste make recknyng [a reckoning], and so furthe muche moor to that effecte. And thene he loked to the King and saide he was not the King of Scotland, for ther was an other king in Scotlande, that hanged

28 'My Lord, the same Master Bellenden informed me that, after the said interlude had finished, the King of Scots spoke to the [Arch]bishop of Glasgow, who was also his chancellor, and a number of other bishops, telling them to reform their divisions and their [immoral] lifestyles, saying that unless they did so, he would send six of the proudest of them to his uncle [the King] of England [Henry VIII], and, whatever Henry did with them, he [James] would do with all the rest who would not amend themselves. And to that the [Arch]bishop replied, and said to the king that a single word from his mouth would be enough to compel them to act. And the king hastily and angrily said that he would gladly bestow any words on them that would make them reform themselves. I am also informed by the same Master Bellenden that the King of Scots is determined to remove all clerics from positions of authority in both his household and in the wider administration and is studying how to do this night and day'. Walker, *Medieval Drama* 539.

John Armestrang with his fellowes, and Sym the Larde,²⁹ and many other moe [more people], which had pacified the countrey, and stanchd thifte [stopped theft / banditry], but he had lefte one thing undon [undone], whiche perteyned aswell to his charge as th[other]. And, whene he was asked what that was, he made a long narracion of the oppression of the poor by the taking of the corse presaunte beistes,³⁰ and of the herying [harrying] of poor men by concistorye [consistory] lawe, and of many other abussions of the spritual[itie] and church, withe many long stories and auctorities [supporting evidence].

Lyndsay's Poor Man thus spoke his truth both for and to power of various kinds, opening up a rich seam of political discussion. What was for James an opportunity to foreground his own role as protector and champion of the poor was for the playwright a chance to counsel the king in ways that he might have found less comfortable. If James v was 'the poor man's king', then, that self-representation was always a work in progress, an aspect of his authorised royal persona (and of his later reputation) that could be deployed in political negotiation to powerful effect, both by James v and his ministers and those who wished to counsel or persuade him. What did it mean to be a poor man's king? How might it oblige James—or another governor who aspired to the role in later years—to behave in any given situation? It certainly empowered them to act decisively, and seemingly with moral authority, in their dealings with those who might be perceived—or represented—to be working against the interests of the poor. Thus the Interlude cued James effectively to confront Archbishop Dunbar and his fellows and press them to yield to further royal taxation in the name of the poor. But the figure could do more than that. The rhetorical stance of the Interlude implies that there is more to being a poor man's king than simply squeezing the coffers of the church. The one thing 'left undone' in James's governance that the Poor Man boldly identifies proves on closer examination to require a whole portfolio of reforms to church and state, the secular as well as the clerical courts, land-tenure and occupancy. Such things would require serious attention beyond intimidating the archbishop. Indeed, in both theory and practice the trope of 'one thing left undone', beneath its deferential surface could prove an effective spur to almost endless reform; an open-ended governmental work-in-progress by which James might be encouraged to realise the ambition of governing in the interests of the poor and impotent.

29 Two border rievvers (bandits), John Armstrong of Gilknockie, hanged at Carlinrigg in 1530 and Simon Armstrong ('Sym the La[i]rd'), hanged in 1536, under James v's jurisdiction.

30 The 'corpe presents' or animals paid as mortuary fees.

The Poor Man, once he had won his license to speak, could be remarkably hard to silence, even in a room filled with kings.

The figure of the Poor Man thus had a powerful symbolic value in the political world of the Stewart court, and also had clear metadramatic, indeed meta-artistic, implications, spanning and interweaving the worlds of drama and politics, artistic representation and political debate. Just as the carved image on the king's house at Stirling breached and transcended the allegorical scheme of the statuary around it through the immediacy of its detail and simplicity, so too did the Poor Man look outward from the Linlithgow Interlude to the court beyond, blurring the boundaries of art and politics, personification and representation, and drawing James V and his court into the world of the play.

And Pauper in the 1552 and 1554 productions takes that political agenda further again. He too speaks out boldly and vociferously and will not be silenced. He too blurs the distinction between play-world and audience-world in unsettling ways, leaving spectators initially uncertain whether he is a figure within the play or an intruder from beyond it. He does not fulfil a clear allegorical role because his persona and role are not fixed. Rather he fluctuates violently between apparent antagonism towards the play and vigorous participation in its debates, between rejection of all authority and an apparently earnest attempt to co-opt the play's authorities to aid him. It is thus left unclear precisely whose responsibility it is to attend to the grievances he raises and to correct them. Is it Rex Humanitas and the Estates within the play, or the burgesses, the provost, bailies, and the ordinary citizens of Cupar, and the Queen Regent, Mary of Guise, and nobles in Edinburgh who must rise to the challenge? And that, presumably, is precisely the question Lyndsay wanted his audiences to ask themselves.

The sheer audacity of what Lyndsay was doing with Pauper, and with the morality form generally, perhaps explains why the *Satire* did not spawn a host of successors in the following decades. Reformation anxieties about public entertainment reduced the opportunities for further dramatic experimentation in Scotland in the sixteenth century. And there was simply no equivalent public drama—no equivalent public sphere—south of the border in which the nation's governors, urban elites, and common people might gather to witness such ambitious, wide-ranging, and hard-hitting dramas about civic and national responsibilities and communal identity, even had they wished to. The only remotely similar forum in England was provided by the urban religious dramas of York, Chester, and other northern towns, and their scope was more circumscribed, and their days as a forum for collective communal self-examination already numbered by the religious divisions evident in the 1560s. Hence the *Satire of the Three Estates* remained a one-off: Scotland's best kept



FIGURE 9.3 *Folly* (Gerard Mulgrew) preaches, while *Diligence* (Liam Brennan) and *Verity* (Alison Peebles) look on. Image from the 2013 Linlithgow production of *The Three Estates*.

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dramatic secret and the best European drama that no one outside Scotland has ever seen.

The play can, however, tell us a good deal about traditional medieval modes of dramatic representation. It suggests the power and the flexibility of the allegorical mode, its porousness to other forms of representation, and also its limitations, and the frustrations it might provoke in a playwright wishing to do something more than chart a familiar didactic course. The figure of Pauper, like Folly, whose sermon closes the play [Fig. 9.3], suggests both the possibilities of personification allegory and its limitations especially well. Folly, embodying the complex, paradoxical nature of foolishness as imagined in Erasmus' *Praise of Folly*, is at once stupid and wise, risibly shallow and profoundly deep. He is driven by the most basic of lusts and the highest of ideals, farcically failing to suppress an erection one minute, and chastening the kings of Europe for betraying Christian principles the next. One moment he cannot even remember his own name, the next he is quoting Latin maxims and glossing them. He is thus polyvalent and protean, a personification of something too rich and strange to sustain a single, stable persona. Similarly Pauper, for all his apparent simplicity and authenticity to himself, is also too unstable, too idiosyncratic

to represent a stable conceptualisation. The poverty he represents cannot be reduced to an idea, or abstracted to an ideal, but rather resides solely in the specific conditions of one man's misery. In one sense his agenda is painfully simple: he wants back the cows he believes the clergy have stolen from him. In another it is infinitely broad, a fundamental challenge both to the authority of kings and popes and to the integrity of morality drama as a form. He says that he would not give a sow's fart for the play that gives him life, 'For thair is richt lytill play at my hungrie hart' (ll. 1964–1965). And in that single sentence he voices all the doubts about the potency of allegorical drama as a vehicle for real social reform discussed above. Can a play bring about social change—especially if it operates on the level of abstract personification? Pauper claims that it cannot, that the play has little or nothing in common with the real world in which he lives. Yet by his very nature and his appearance in the *Satire* as a spokesman for the poor voiceless commons, he nonetheless suggests that the two worlds might be brought into productive dialogue.

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Both One and the Other: The Educational Value of Personification in the Female Humanist Theatre of Peeter Heyns (1537–1598)

Alisa van de Haar

In her teenage years in Antwerp, Abigael Fagel (1567–1637), the daughter of a prominent merchant and alderman,¹ starred in the roles of a character named Natural Law (*Loy de Nature*) and the chorus in both a French and Dutch version of a play written by her teacher Peeter Heyns (1537–1598). Over ten years later, Heyns decided to publish three of his dramatic pieces, which by then had been restaged several times. He dedicated one of them to his former pupil and actress Abigael, stating that she had performed her role ‘so well and credibly that the memory of the Spectators and Auditors of that time will forever be imprinted with it.’²

With these performances, Heyns professed progressive ideas on the instruction of young women.³ He adapted the humanist trend of using Neo-Latin plays as instructional tools in Latin schools to his French school for girls, a novel type of educational institution in the sixteenth-century Low Countries. The polyglot and scholarly schoolmaster and author Heyns followed the latest trends in educational theories but also in literature. His progressive attitude made him an appreciated writer and translator and turned his Antwerp girls’ school, named The Laurel Tree (*De Lauwerboom*), into a famous institution. It attracted numerous girls like Abigael, who would later marry a council member

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- 1 Regt W.M.C., “Fagel (François) (1)”, in *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek* (Leiden: 1914) 385–386.
 - 2 Heyns Peeter, *Le miroir des mesnageres* (Haarlem, Gillis Rooman: 1595) fol. A2r–v: ‘si proprement & naïvement que le los & la memoire en demeurera à tousiours empreinte és Auditeurs & Spectateurs d’alors’. All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.
 - 3 However, Karel Porteman seems to take Heyns’s progressiveness somewhat too far when he attributes ‘emancipatory intentions’ to him. Porteman K., “Vlaams meisjestoneel uit het Ancien Régime: een verkenning”, in Bussels S. (ed.), *Liber amicorum Prof. dr. Jaak van Schoor, meester in vele kunsten*, Studies in Performing Arts and Film 5 (Antwerp – Ghent: 2003) 102–109, esp. 103. For a further discussion of Heyns’s supposed feminism, see Capitani P. De, “Una ‘pièce scolaire’ della seconda metà del cinquecento: *Susanne ou le miroir des mesnagères* di Pierre Heyns” in Dassonville M. (ed.), *Saggi e ricerche sul teatro francese del Cinquecento* (Florence: 1985) 167–181.

of the Court of Holland.⁴ Many of Heyns's pupils were scions of distinguished families; they were sent from all over the Low Countries to be instructed at The Laurel Tree.

Three of Heyns's educational dramatic productions have come down to us in print, although he must have written more.⁵ These texts, portraying the three stages in the life of sixteenth-century women, are titled *Le miroir des meres* (*The mirror of mothers*), *Le miroir des mesnageres* (*The mirror of housewives*) [Fig. 10.1] and *Le miroir des vefves* (*The mirror of widows*).⁶ They were all written and staged in Antwerp in the late 1570s and early 1580s.⁷ *Le miroir des mesnageres* and *Le miroir des meres* were subsequently performed in Stade (Germany) and Haarlem (Holland), after Heyns was forced to leave Antwerp, which had been reconquered by the Habsburg Catholic king. Heyns's son Zacharias was responsible for publishing the plays, which appeared in Haarlem in 1595 and 1596.⁸ Although the printed editions are in French, Heyns also wrote a Dutch version of *Le miroir des mesnageres*, which he meant to publish but never did.⁹ It was, as can be derived from a list of actresses present in his account books, staged in his school in Antwerp.¹⁰ Since the published version of *Le miroir des meres* contains a final song in Dutch, in which the names of the characters have been given in their Dutch forms, it seems likely that this play also existed in both languages.¹¹

Two of the works, *Le miroir des meres* and *Le miroir des vefves*, treat biblical stories. *Le miroir des meres* is based on *Exodus* 1–2, the story of the birth of Moses, whose mother Jochebed (*Iokebed*) protected him from infanticide by concealing him in a basket and setting it adrift in the river Nile. In *Le miroir des vefves*, the biblical widow Judith (*Iudith*) seduces and decapitates the leader of the army oppressing her people. *Le miroir des mesnageres* contains a rather different type of subject, portraying two Antwerp sisters in the early years of married life. While one sister behaves virtuously and wisely, and maintains a

4 Regt, "Fagel (François) (1)" 385–386.

5 In the preface of his *Miroir des mesnageres*, Heyns announced the appearance of a play on the five wise and five foolish virgins which, seemingly, never saw the light. Heyns, *Le miroir des mesnageres* fol. A3r.

6 Heyns, *Le miroir des mesnageres*; Heyns Peeter, *Le mirior des meres* (Haarlem, Gillis Rooman: 1596); Heyns Peeter, *Le miroir des vefves* (Haarlem, Gillis Rooman: 1596).

7 Heyns, *Le miroir des mesnageres* fol. A2r; Heyns, *Le miroir des meres* fol. A2r; Heyns, *Le miroir des vefves* 91.

8 In 2002, *Le miroir des meres* and *Le miroir des vefves* have been reprinted in the series *La tragédie à l'époque d'Henri III* published by Olschki.

9 Heyns, *Le miroir des mesnageres* fol. A2r.

10 Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerp, M240, fol. 166r.

11 Heyns, *Le miroir des meres* 85–87.

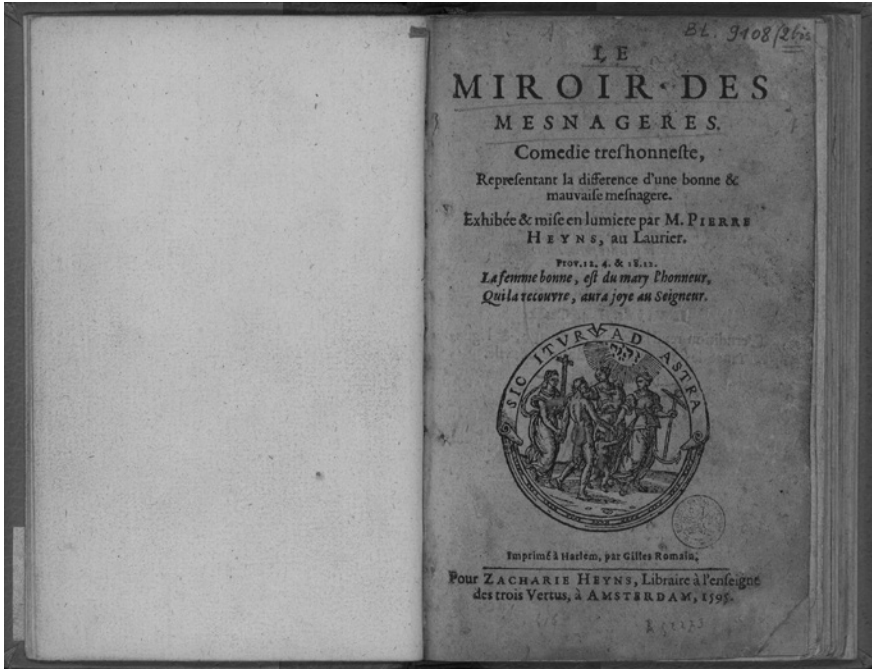


FIGURE 10.1 *Title page of Peeter Heyns, Le miroir des mesnageres (Haarlem, Gillis Rooman: 1595). Ghent, University Library, B.L. 9108 2bis.*
IMAGE © GHENT UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.

well-functioning household, the other, focused on worldly pleasures, loses all her possessions. Each of the plays has been carefully subdivided into a five-act structure, and *Le miroir des mesnageres* even contains a chorus, the part sung by Abigael Fagel. These formal elements correspond to the classical scheme of playwriting which became standard in Neo-Latin humanist drama and in the vernacular theatrical tradition promoted by the French Pléiade group. The fact that Heyns chose to use these elements could thus be considered innovative, for they were based on his knowledge of the latest trends in Neo-Latin or French literature.

As products of the merging of two new developments in early modern education—the French school for girls and the humanist use of school plays—these plays are valuable sources for literary historians, historians of education, and scholars interested in gender studies. Nevertheless, relatively little attention has been paid to the works.¹² In the literary scholarship, primary attention

12 An exception to this general neglect is the interest shown in the topic by Hubert Meeus, who has written several articles on Heyns and the *Miroir* plays. See notably Meeus H.

has been paid to language as a categorizing factor. The *Miroir* plays have been mentioned several times in overviews of French drama,¹³ which swiftly dispose of Heyns's texts, describing them pejoratively as 'Trite plays containing allegorical characters' ('Pièces banales à personnages allégoriques').¹⁴ Indeed, over two thirds of the listed figures are personifications of abstract entities or values. Strikingly, *Le miroir des vefves* even contains a character carrying the telling name Allegory (*Allegorie*). As formulated in contemporary dictionaries typically used in French schools such as Heyns's Laurel Tree, the term 'allegory' indicated that 'something else is meant than the words state' ('Alsmen iet anders neemt [read: meent] dan de woorden aen haer seluen luyden').¹⁵ Allegory's interlocutor Docility (*Docilité*) calls her on stage to explain to the audience the different meanings that can be attributed to the biblical story being staged. She asks Allegory to comment on the 'spiritual meaning' present behind the 'literal' story of Judith.¹⁶ And so she does, assigning interpretations to the play on different levels, both spiritually and with regard to contemporary events. Allegory is introduced as the very 'spirit, soul, and life of the story' and her prominent role at the end of this play is indicative of the importance assigned to the revelation of deeper meanings.¹⁷ The focus on the fact that the plays were written in French has led scholars to compare them with the French theatre of the time. The standards adopted by modern researchers have long been dominated by the poets of the Pléiade, who rejected the use of

"Peeter Heyns, a 'French schoolmaster'", in Clercq J. de – Lioce N. – Swiggers P. (eds.), *Grammaire et enseignement du français, 1500–1700*, Orbis Supplementa 16 (Leuven: 2000) 301–316; and Meeus H., "Peeter Heyns' *Le miroir des vefves*, meer dan schooltoneel?", in Vanneste A.M.S. (ed.), *Memoire en temps advenir' : hommage à Theo Venckeleer* (Leuven: 2003) 115–134.

- 13 Heyns is mentioned, for example, in the overview works by Kosta Loukovitch, Raymond Lebègue, John Street, and Yves Le Hir, and it has been stated by Hubert Meeus that Heyns 'earns a place in French literary history'. Meeus, "Peeter Heyns, a 'French schoolmaster'" 311. However, in the same article, Meeus has taken a first step in placing *Le miroir des vefves* in the tradition of Netherlandish rhetoricians' drama.
- 14 Loukovitch K., *La tragédie religieuse classique en France* (Paris: 1933) 60.
- 15 Sasbout Mathias, *Dictionnaire francoys-flameng/Recueilli des plus accomplis Dictionnaires dernièrement imprimez en France, par Mathias Sasbout* (Antwerp, Jan van Waesberghe: 1579) fol. B8r. See also Mellema Elcie Edouard Leon, *Dictionnaire françois-flamen : tres-ample et copieux, augmenté outre les precedentes impressions d'un nombre presque infini de mots, dictions et vocables* (Rotterdam, Jan 11 van Waesberghe: 1599) fol. B5v.
- 16 Heyns, *Le miroir des vefves* 86: 'sens spirituel', l'histoire de la virile Iudith, exhibée selon la lettre'.
- 17 Ibid. 86: 'esprit, ame & vie de l'histoire'.

personification-based allegory.¹⁸ This explains why, in the overviews published during the first half of the twentieth century, these plays garnered little attention or esteem.

However, Heyns should also be considered in his Netherlandish context, even though the three extant *Miroir* plays are in French. Presumably, at least two of his works were written in a Dutch version as well, and Heyns was 'a son of Antwerp, who never saw France' ('een Antwerps soon, die Vrancrijc noyt en sach').¹⁹ Furthermore, French was also a local language in the Low Countries. In Dutch literary culture, hardly any objections to the use of personification in drama seem to have been made.²⁰ The vernacular dramatic tradition was dominated by the Netherlandish rhetoricians, who practiced the art of rhetoric in the environment of their so-called chambers of rhetoric. In their productions, the use of allegory and personification flourished, and this local context puts Heyns's plays in a different light. Furthermore, in recent years, scholars have demonstrated that the rhetoricians' drama, including its use of personification, was in fact much closer to novel trends in humanist drama than earlier scholars had thought.²¹ In many ways, rhetoricians used their theatre in

18 Taille Jean de la, *Saul le furieux, Tragédie prise de la Bible, Faicte selon l'art & à la mode des vieux Autheurs Tragiques* (Paris, Federic Morel: 1572) fol. 3v.

19 Anthoni Smyters in Heyns Peeter, *Cort onderwijs van de acht deelen der Fransoischer talen (1571 en 1605)*, ed. E. Ruijsendaal (Münster: 2006) fol. A3r/5.

20 Spies M., "Poeetsche fabriicken' en andere allegorieën, eind 16^{de}–begin 17^{de} eeuw", *Oud Holland* 105,4 (1991) 228–243. In fact, no Dutch treatises providing a theory on drama seem to have been produced in the sixteenth-century Low Countries; Meeus H., "Verschillen in structuur en dramaturgie tussen het rederijkerstoneel en het vroege renaissance drama: poging tot het schetsen van een ontwikkeling", in Ramakers B. (ed.), *Spel in de verte: tekst, structuur en opvoeringspraktijk van het rederijkerstoneel: bijdragen aan het colloquium ter gelegenheid van het emeritaat van W.M.H. Hummelen*, special issue *Jaarboek De Fonteyne* 41–42 (1991–1992) (Ghent: 1994) 97–118, esp. 98–99. I would like to thank Hubert Meeus for his input on this topic.

21 Ramakers, B., "Bruegel en de rederijders: schilderkunst en literatuur in de zestiende eeuw", *Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 47 (1997) 80–105; Ramakers B., "Tonen en betogen. De dramaturgie van de Rotterdamse spelen van 1561", in Duits H. – Strien T. van (eds.), *De rhetorische in vele manieren. Lezingen bij het afscheid van Marijke Spies als Hoogleraar Oudere Nederlandse Letterkunde aan de Vrije Universiteit te Amsterdam*, special issue *Spiegel der Letteren* 43,3 (2001) 176–204; Bussels S., "Hoe overtuigt Coornherts *Comedie vande Rijckeman? Enargeia* en het opvoeren van personificaties", *Spiegel der Letteren* 50,1 (2008) 1–40. For the connections between humanists and rhetoricians, see Dixhoorn A.C. van, "Writing Poetry as Intellectual Training: Chambers of Rhetoric and the Development of Vernacular Intellectual Life in the Low Countries Between 1480 and 1600", in Goudriaan K. – Moolenbroek J. van – Tervoort A. (eds.), *Education and Learning*

innovative ways that corresponded to the humanist interest in rhetoric. These insights require us to situate Heyns's *Miroir* plays within the humanist context of contemporary Neo-Latin drama, as also within the French theatre and the rhetoricians' plays. By placing Heyns's plays and their personifications in the multifaceted literary context for which they were created, as well as considering the educational purposes they were written to serve, this article will demonstrate how innovative was his use of personification and why it was valued as a key feature of female drama.²² Heyns applied his knowledge of trends in the vernacular theatre of France and the Netherlands and in Neo-Latin humanist drama, to fashion plays that combine various functional elements into a whole that is difficult to categorize but was clearly very suitable for his young female students.

The Laurel Tree

The school for which Heyns wrote his plays was an example of a novel type of educational institution recently established in the Low Countries, the French school or *Walsche school*. Such schools provided private education, and they swiftly expanded in the Dutch speaking regions during the sixteenth century. The schoolmasters and schoolmistresses of the French schools taught their pupils the skills and knowledge that were deemed necessary for a career in international trade, an important sector in large towns such as Ghent, Bruges, and especially Antwerp.²³ The curriculum included lessons in French and arithmetic. Several institutions focused specifically on the instruction of young girls.²⁴ Whereas the existing Latin schools were out of their reach, these French schools offered well-off young women an education that would prove

in the Netherlands, 1400–1600: Essays in Honour of Hilde De Ridder-Symoens (Leiden: 2004) 201–222; and idem, “Soorten rederijkers: rederijkers en hun plaats in het intellectuele veld, 1550–1650”, in Coigneau D. – Mareel S. (eds.), *Met eigen ogen. De rederijker als dichtend individu (1450–1600)*, special issue *Jaarboek De Fonteyne* 58 (2009) 87–119.

22 Similar calls for the contextualization of early modern plays have been made by Parente J.A., *Religious Drama and the Humanist Tradition. Christian Theater in Germany and in the Netherlands 1500–1680* (Leiden: 1987) 5–8; and Meeus, “Verschillen in structuur”.

23 Riemens K.J., *Esquisse historique de l'enseignement du français en Hollande du XVI^e au XIX^e siècle* (Leiden: 1939) 10–59; Clercq J. de – Lioce N. – Swiggers P., “Grammaire et enseignement du français langue étrangère entre 1500 et 1700”, in Clercq J. de – Lioce N. – Swiggers P. (eds.), *Grammaire et enseignement du français, 1500–1700*, Orbis Supplementa 16 (Leuven: 2000) IX–XXXIV.

24 Meeus, “Peeter Heyns, a ‘French schoolmaster’” 301.

useful for their future lives as wives of merchants, allowing them to support their husbands in their professional activities. Peeter Heyns's Laurel Tree was one of these institutions, but his school was distinctive in its addition of drama to the regular curriculum.

In the Latin schools of the time, which prepared young men for further education at a university, Latin classical drama had already been incorporated into the curriculum by the beginning of the sixteenth century. In the 1520s and 1530s, problematic moral issues that arose in the classical plays, combined with the need for works that were more didactically efficient, led humanist teachers to start producing their own plays.²⁵ Drama was deemed a suitable tool for teaching proper behavior and moral lessons, because of its ability both to reflect and reflect on society.²⁶ School plays could present students with a mirror of their current or future selves, giving them the opportunity to evaluate their standing within the social world. Together with linguistic skills and moral conduct, the educational drama of the humanists also taught their pupils how to behave and speak publicly, as explained in a late sixteenth-century sample invitation to a performance:²⁷

At times, our Master makes us perform a Comedy or Tragedy, so that we learn good manners and eloquence, but primarily so that we and all those who see [the play] are instructed, learning as through a lively example, how we should organize our lives, shun evil and do good [...].²⁸

Of course, the students would also train their memory by learning their lines by heart. For the teachers, the dramatic performances offered welcome opportunities to present their school and the accomplishments of their students to

25 Parente, *Religious Drama* 6; Muir L.R., *The Biblical Drama of Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: 1995) 162–163.

26 Worp J.A., *Geschiedenis van het drama en van het tooneel in Nederland*, vol. 1 (Groningen: 1904) 197; Fleurkens A., “Meer dan vrije expressie: schooltoneel tijdens de renaissance”, *Literatuur* 5,2 (1988) 75–82, esp. 76.

27 Bloemendal J., *Spiegel van het dagelijks leven? Latijnse school en toneel in de noordelijke Nederlanden in de zestiende en de zeventiende eeuw*, Zeven Provinciënreeks 22 (Hilversum: 2003) 65.

28 Fleurkens, “Meer dan vrije expressie” 76: ‘onse Meester laet ons somtijts een Comedie oft Tragedie spelen, om dat wy daer deur soudē leeren goede manieren, oock welspreken, maer principalijc dat wij ende al die gheen diet sien, daer door soudē gesticht ende geleert wesen, als duer een levendich exempel, hoe dat wy ons leven sullen aenstellen, om het quaet te schouwen en goet te doen’.

an audience of parents and potential clients.²⁹ During the period of religious upheavals, college performances were also often employed as tools for conveying specific religious points of view and thus became notorious as instruments of propaganda, both on the Protestant and on the Catholic sides.³⁰

The Antwerp schoolmaster Heyns knew the classical tradition and was familiar with the educational goals of humanist dramatic productions. His knowledge of recent trends is confirmed by his friend Gerard de Vivere, a fellow teacher who dedicated one of his plays to him:

I do this even more gladly, because I know that you, as a great lover of poetry, also love and admire the inventions of the ancient authors, from which we have extracted the subject matter of the present Comedy [...].³¹

Heyns was also familiar with the humanist writings of Desiderius Erasmus and Juan Luis Vives about the education of young children, and applied them actively in his girls' school.³² Next to his professional activities as a teacher, he was also a prolific author and translator, writing in both French and Dutch. In his youth, he had been the *factor* or leading poet of a chamber of rhetoric, a type of lay institution in which people, so-called rhetoricians, practicing the art of rhetoric in the vernacular, came together to discuss their interests and exchange their literary efforts.³³ As *factor*, he participated in literary competitions and also produced *zinnespelen*, allegorical plays in the typical

29 Worp, *Geschiedenis van het drama* 199; Bloemendal, *Spiegel van het dagelijks leven* 67.

30 Jonker G.D., *Le Protestantisme et le théâtre de langue française au XVI^e siècle* (Groningen: 1939) 191–192; Waite G.K., *Reformers on Stage: Popular Drama and Religious Propaganda in the Low Countries of Charles V, 1515–1556* (Toronto: 2000); Washof W., *Die Bibel auf der Bühne. Exempelfiguren und Protestantische Theologie im lateinischen und deutschen Bibeldrama der Reformationszeit* (Münster: 2007) 17.

31 Vivere Gerard de, *Comedie des amours de Theseus et Dianira* (Paris, Nicolas Bonfons: 1578) fol. 2r: 'Ce que ie fay dautant plus voluntiers, que ie cognoy que vous, comme grand amateur de poësie, aymez et admirez aussi les inuentions des anciens autheurs, desquels nous auons extraict la matiere de la presente Comedie'.

32 Sabbe M., *Peeter Heyns en de Nimfen uit den Lauwerboom. Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis van het schoolwezen in de 16e eeuw* (Antwerp: 1929) 37–38; Noël J.M.J.L., "L'école des filles et la philosophie du mariage dans les Pays-Bas du XVI^e et du XVII^e siècle", in Frijhoff W.T.M. (ed.), *Onderwijs & opvoeding in de achttiende eeuw: verslag van het symposium, Doesburg 1982* (Amsterdam: 1983) 137–153. See also Heyns, *Le miroir des meres* fol. A1v. The verso of the title page contains a quotation taken from Vives.

33 Vandommele J.J.M., *Als in een spiegel. Vrede, kennis en gemeenschap op het Antwerpse Landjuweel van 1561*, *Middeleeuwse Studies en Bronnen* 132 (Hilversum: 2011) 16–17.

rhetoricians' style, featuring personified virtues and vices that body forth a moral lesson (*sin*).³⁴ He was thus intimately familiar with the works and traditions of the Netherlandish rhetoricians; but he was also very aware of the latest poetical trends in France and was even among the first rhetoricians to use the new French metre in his verse.³⁵ Heyns closely followed the literary developments promoted by chambers of rhetoric in the Low Countries and by the French Pléiade, and he was able to choose the best of both worlds. His five-act plays, written for pupils, made use of recent developments in humanist pedagogy and also incorporated literary novelties put forward by the French Pléiade and Neo-Latin authors. However, in his use of personification allegory, Heyns chose not to follow the latest developments from France.

Personification Allegory

The particular use of allegory and, more specifically, of personification allegory in Heyns's texts deserves further explanation. His actresses portrayed a broad array of concepts that functioned on very different levels. Each of them was probably provided with a characteristic attribute,³⁶ as well as with a placard hanging from the neck, which stated who or what they represented, in the manner described by one of the characters in *Le miroir des meres*: 'your name, shown before you, and mine, written before my chest in large letters' ('vostre nom, fiché devant vous, & le mien, escrit devant ma poitrine en grosses lettres'; p. 3). A contemporary visual example of this phenomenon can be found in a print made by Philip Galle and Hieronymus Cock after a drawing by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. The top left corner of the engraving, titled *Temperantia*, contains a stage with two actors carrying the names of their characters on banderoles attached to their clothing [Fig. 10.2].³⁷

34 A modern edition of the texts can be found in Ryckaert R. *De Antwerpse spelen van 1561 naar de editie Silvius (Antwerpen 1562) II* (Ghent: 2011) 1287–1350. For more information on *zinnespelen*, see Bart Ramakers's chapter in this volume.

35 Waterschoot W., "Marot ou Ronsard? New French Poetics Among Dutch Rhetoricians in the Second Half of the 16th Century", in Koopmans J. et al. (eds.), *Rhetoric – Rhétoriqueurs – Rederijkers* (Amsterdam: 1995) 141–156, esp. 147.

36 Fame (*Rumour*) probably carried wings because she is said to 'fly from mouth to mouth', allowing her to reach the enemy camp and return swiftly. Heyns, *Le miroir des vefves* 30: 'je vole parmi plusieurs bouches'. Meeus "Peeter Heyns' *Le miroir des vefves*" 126.

37 Hummelen, W.M.H., "Toneel op de kermis, van Bruegel tot Bredero", *Oud Holland* 103 (1989), 1–45, esp. 2; Bleyerveld Y., "De geschilderde intrede van de Dordtse Fonteynisten in Vlaardingse in 1616", in Ramakers B. et al., *Op de Hollandse Parnas: de Vlaardingse*



FIGURE 10.2 *Philip Galle and Hieronymus Cock after a drawing by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Temperantia (c. 1560–1562). Detail. Engraving, 224 mm × 296 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-7376.*

All three plays put forth more traditional, metaphorical personifications such as Faith (*Foy*), Hope (*Esperance*), Prosperity (*Prosperité*), rendered by Abigael Fagel's sister Sara), and Curiosity (*Curiosité*), each representing a specific state of mind or of affairs. At the same time Holy Scripture (*Escripture Saincte*), embodying an object or perhaps the Word of God, and Israelite People (*Gent-Israelite*), synecdochically impersonating a large group of people, would have appeared on the scene. These different types of personification can also be found in contemporary rhetoricians' drama. The allegorical figures occupied the stage at the same time as the human protagonists who were sometimes also identifiable as biblical characters. The school plays could thus be characterized, using the terminology of Wim Hummelen, as epic dramas or histories,

rederijkerswedstrijd van 1616 (Zwolle: 1996) 126–147, esp. 139; Ramakers B., “De Const getoond. De beeldtaal van de Haarlemse rederijkerswedstrijd van 1606”, *Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 49 (1998) 129–184, esp. 145; Vandommele, *Als in een spiegel* 70.

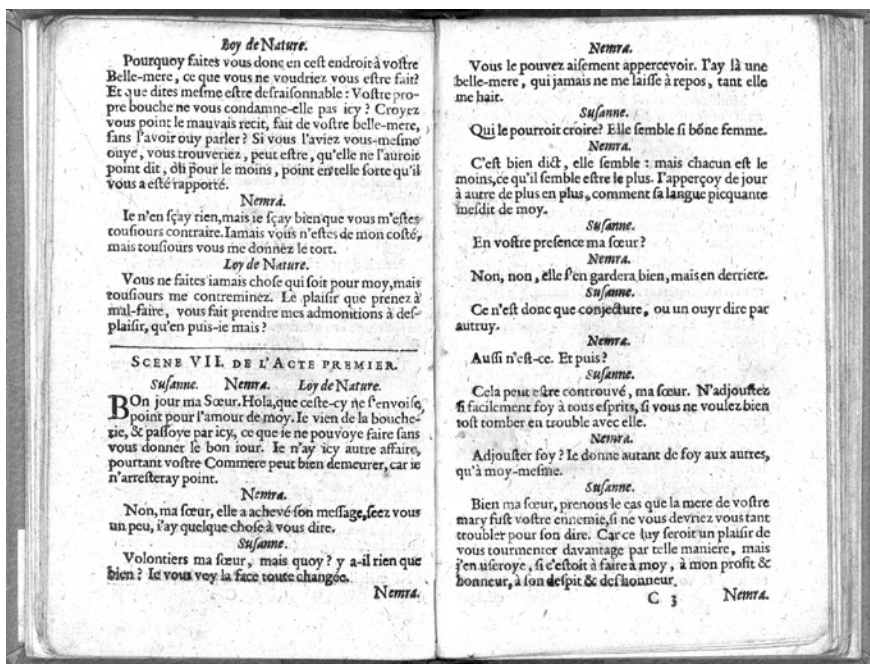


FIGURE 10.3 Peeter Heyns, *Le miroir des mesnageres* (Haarlem, Gillis Rooman: 1595) fols. C2v–C3r. Ghent, University Library, B.L. 9108 2bis.
IMAGE © GHENT UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.

a type of rhetoricians' play combining allegorical and historical or realistic characters.³⁸

In Heyns's plays, several personifications are seen to descend from the supernatural to the terrestrial sphere where they fulfill various mundane functions while simultaneously representing abstract entities. Susanne's daughter is called Good-Conscience (*Bonne-Conscience*), Natural Law (impersonated by Abigael) is her aunt, and Adversity (*Adversité*) her servant [Fig. 10.3]. In all the plays, one also witnesses allegorical figures performing gender-specific activities, such as a woman's daily rounds of cooking and cleaning in *Le miroir des meres*: 'You, Affliction, go inside and prepare dinner before my husband

38 Hummelen W.H.M., *Repertorium van het rederijkersdrama 1500–ca. 1620* (Assen: 1968) 12; Ramakers B, "Dutch Allegorical Theatre: Tradition and Conceptual Approach", in Strietman E. – Happé P. (eds.), *Urban Theatre in the Low Countries, 1400–1625*, Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe 12 (Turnhout: 2006) 127–147, esp. 137–138.

arrives' ('Toy Affliction, va là dedans, & appreste le souper tandis que mon mari viendra'; p. 33). These domestic, familial, and everyday activities cross the divide between the world of personification and the world of familiar human behavior. They demonstrate the tension, as Wim Hummelen and Bart Ramakers have argued, visible in all allegorical drama, between visually stereotypical characteristics that point in the direction of the personified notions embodied by the different characters, and the individuality of these characters as related to the mimetic verisimilitude of the stories they enact. The individual personality of each figure within the space of the play allows the public to immerse themselves in the story and empathize with the characters, but it may also prove difficult to reconcile with the joint status of these 'individuals' as static beings that personify notions and convey (moral) meaning on a metadramatic level.³⁹

Another particularity of Heyns's drama is his frequent breaking down of the fourth wall. Each play contains a pro- and epilogue comprising a *captatio benevolentiae*, an introduction to the subject matter and commentary on the representation, an apostrophic device that was rather common in the dramatic tradition of the rhetoricians.⁴⁰ These introductory and concluding scenes portray dialogues between pairs of characters who themselves are personifications and who, on multiple occasions, address the spectators directly. Their ability to comment on the stories presented and to ask the audience for silence during the play suggests their competence to step out of the dramatic world. This metadiscursive element has an anti-immersive effect, reminding the public of the fact that they are watching a performance and not witnessing real-life events.⁴¹

On other occasions, too, the allegorical characters recall their artificial nature. When in *Le miroir des meres* Faith struggles to put her trust in God, Jokebed reprimands her, saying 'Does that really correspond to the name you carry?' ('Cela convient-il bien au nom que vous portez?'; p. 28). She thus refers to the custom of naming personifications after the notion they embodied.⁴² An even more prominent example of an anti-immersive character is, of course, the aforementioned Allegory in *Le miroir des vefves*. Her introduction as the 'spirit, soul, and life of the story' ('esprit, ame & vie de l'histoire'; p. 86) reminds

39 Hummelen W.M.H., *De sinnekens in het rederijersdrama* (Groningen: 1958) 10–11. For further explanation see Ramakers, "Dutch Allegorical Theatre" 127–147.

40 See for further information Dis L.M. van – Erné B.H., *De Gentse spelen van 1539*, 2 vols. (The Hague: 1982) I, 13ff.

41 See Ubersfeld A., *Reading Theatre*, trans. F. Collins (Toronto: 1999) 27–31.

42 Furthermore, it could be a reference to the fact that these characters probably carried their names in a literal way, written on signs that were hanging around their necks. Cf. *supra*, p. 264.

the audience that they have in fact been looking at an allegorically charged, not 'realistic' play.⁴³ At the same time, her presence incites the audience to think actively about the different possible meanings of the performance they have been watching. In Allegory, the allegorical value of the play both culminates—she is, after all, a personification of allegory—and breaks down, given the fact that she has been called on stage to delimit the number of possible interpretations that can be attached to the dramatic representation. In fact, Allegory does not play a part in the story itself, but in the treatment of the story by the audience.

The character Allegory distinguishes two different levels of meaning behind the literal (historical) layer. She begins by contrasting Judith and Worldly Widow (*Vefye Mondaine*): the former's pious behavior and battle against the evil Holofernes are opposed to Worldly Widow's lack of virtue, and this opposition stands for the struggle between good and evil that takes place within everyone. She thus ascribes to the play a spiritual meaning in the tradition of Prudentius's *Psychomachia*.⁴⁴ She then demystifies *Le miroir des vefyes*, stating explicitly what the significance of the story is in the larger context of its dramatic staging in the sixteenth-century Low Countries. In other words, she explains how to 'appropriate it to the present time, to please those who do not understand such profound things well' ('appropriier au cours du temps present, au contentement de ceux qui ne sçavent bonnement comprendre chose si profonde'; p. 87). She argues that the oppression of the Israelite people by Holofernes can be compared to the Habsburg king Philip II's treatment of his subjects in the Low Countries. Holofernes forbade the Judaic religion, while Philip prosecuted Protestant sympathizers. The epilogue makes it very clear that Heyns's dramatic works were not just innocent plays performed by a group of schoolgirls. In addition to functioning as propaganda, they also carried various other levels of meaning.

Indeed, *Le miroir des meres* and *Miroir des mesnageres*, too, illustrate 'the usual themes of Protestant propaganda' as identified in the French humanist tradition.⁴⁵ They speak, among other things, of eternal providence and predestination, key concepts within Calvinist doctrine, and mentioned as such in the Confession of Faith espoused by Calvinist communities in the

43 Rens L. – Eemeren G. van, *Genres in het ernstige renaissancetoneel der Nederlanden tot 1625. Verslag van een onderzoek* (Hasselt: 1977) 11.

44 Paxson J.J., *The Poetics of Personification*, Literature, Culture, Theory 6 (Cambridge: 1994) 63–81.

45 Street J.S., *French Sacred Drama from Bèze to Corneille: Dramatic Forms and their Purposes in the Early Modern Theatre* (Cambridge: 1983) 54.

Low Countries. Several dialogues in *Le miroir des meres* clearly serve to provide religious instruction, posing such questions as 'how can cruelty exist if God is almighty and good', an issue raised ironically by the actresses personifying Cruelty (*Cruauté*) and Divine Disposition (*Disposition-Divine*). In these scenes, the dramatic text and performance can really be considered an extension of the pulpit. Humanist drama, like the theatre of the rhetoricians, was often used in this way, to inculcate religious doctrine. Even before the religious upheavals took place, Netherlandish rhetoricians considered such pedagogy to be an important function of their plays.⁴⁶ In later examples of rhetoricians' theater, representative Catholic or Reformist standpoints are often adduced. John Street identifies the use of personification and the insertion of religiously coloured dialogues as key features of Protestant playwriting:

By introducing explicitly allegorical figures Heyns went further than most other writers of Protestant biblical propaganda in the direction of didacticism [...] The Protestant propagandists had no use for the convention that the characters are living beings whose troubles the audience shares: [...] their prime concern was not to speak to the sensibilities of their spectators but to address their intellect with an irrefutable example supported by a clear exposition of the success of relying on God for protection when oppressed for their faith.⁴⁷

However, in the *Miroir* plays, discussions of the one true faith and evocations of the horror of oppression alternate with portrayals of everyday concerns and activities, in the style of the rhetoricians. Heyns's personifications are not just reminders of the artificial nature of drama, they are, simultaneously, living beings that actually did 'speak to the sensibilities of their spectators'. In *Le miroir des meres*, directly after the moralizing conversation between Divine Disposition and Cruelty, for example, Human Wisdom (*Sagesse-Humaine*) is surprised to find Cruelty loitering lazily; she explains herself by stating, 'I don't like housekeeping' ('Le mesnager ne me plait point'; p. 16). Especially in *Le miroir des mesnageres*, Heyns abruptly shifts between dialogues focusing on very general ethical-moral lessons and discussions centering on the struggles of daily life. By inserting scenes of everyday activities, he operates beyond the

46 Boheemen F.C. van – Heijden Th.C.J. van der, *De Westlandse rederijerskamers in de 16^e en 17^e eeuw* (Amsterdam: 1985) 52–61; Waite, *Reformers on Stage*; Moser N., *De strijd voor rhetorica. Poëtica en positie van rederijers in Vlaanderen, Brabant, Zeeland en Holland tussen 1450 en 1620* (Amsterdam: 2001) 19, 53, 67–97; Washof, *Die Bibel auf der Bühne* 17–18.

47 Street, *French sacred drama* 56.

confines of what Street considers typical (French) Protestant propaganda, and nor does he entirely subscribe to the rules propagated by the Pléiade. Although he was aware of these French literary developments, Heyns still decided to opt for a type of text that was more closely aligned with the rhetoricians' drama that his Netherlandish audience would have known well. Its personifications allowed him to offer moral instruction, not only by means of explicit lessons, but also through empathy and immersion. The audience was urged to empathize with recognizably human personifications and to evaluate their actions, but they were also challenged to decipher the abstract notions embodied by these same characters, through their appearance, statements, and actions.⁴⁸ The use of personification allegory did not exclude the possibility of engaging with these persons on an emotional level or construing their deeds as patently human.

Heyns's use of personifications that evoke certain emotions and stimulate the audience to empathize with them can be connected to rhetoricians' drama, but also to classical and humanist trends. As recent scholarship has demonstrated, the literary traditions of the humanists and those of the Netherlandish rhetoricians were closely related in many ways.⁴⁹ The trope of personification appeared long before the Medieval period, of course, as a rhetorical device used in classical dramatic texts.⁵⁰ These texts became popular in the humanist schools of the sixteenth century. Terence and Plautus, among other authors, utilized Greek names to designate specific roles in their Latin plays, thereby informing the audience of the specific characteristics represented by these *dramatis personae*.⁵¹ This use on stage of personifications who embody abstract concepts in word and deed was construed in classical rhetoric as a form of *enargeia*, vividness. This term refers to the coming to life of a particular principle, which is made visible and thus evokes emotions and feelings of empathy, increasing the impact of the concept being demonstrated to an audience.⁵² Visualizing abstract concepts in the form of personifications also had a mnemotechnic function, making it easier to recall the lessons being

48 See also Bussels, "Hoe overtuigt Coornherts *Comedie vande Rijckeman*".

49 Ramakers, "Tonen en betogen".

50 Ramakers, "Dutch Allegorical Theatre" 131; Bussels, "Hoe overtuigt Coornherts *Comedie vande Rijckeman*" 4–5.

51 Austin J.C., *The significant name in Terence*, University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature 7.4 (Urbana: 1922); Duckworth G.E., *The Nature of Roman Comedy: A Study in Popular Entertainment* (Princeton: 1952) 346–350; Fontaine M., *Funny words in Plautine Comedy* (Oxford 2010) 22–23, 63, 253.

52 Bussels, "Hoe overtuigt Coornherts *Comedie vande Rijckeman*" 4–5; Ramakers B., "Eloquent Presence: Verbal and Visual Discourse in the Ghent plays of 1539", in Brusati C. – Enenkel K.A.E. (eds.), *The Authority of the Word: Reflecting on Image and Text in Northern Europe*,

taught.⁵³ Some humanist authors of Neo-Latin school plays took up this principle, devising personifications such as the cunning Jewish girl Witty (*Prhonesium*) in Schonaeus's *Naaman* (1572).⁵⁴ Heyns's reliance on personification allegory thus arose not only from his knowledge of contemporary rhetorical practices, but also from his familiarity with classical and Neo-Latin drama, wherein personification fulfilled a number of important functions.

Drama for Girls

The use of personification allegory may have been a way of signalling Heyns's commitment to Neo-Latin and vernacular contemporary dramatic practices, but it also answered to more particular requirements. When he decided to use drama in his school, he was more or less obliged to write new pieces specifically appropriate for girls. Virtually all existing plays, whether classical or humanist, were designed for a cast of male actors.⁵⁵ His first concern would therefore have been to create plays primarily featuring female characters. The insertion of allegorical figures was one way of solving this problem. In French, the names of abstract entities are often feminine, justifying the choice of girls to portray them.⁵⁶ The use of personification made it possible, for instance, to represent the city government—in practice, typically male—as a woman named Superiority (*Supériorité*). Furthermore, the impossibility in this context of staging scenes with male actors impelled him to incorporate female figures tasked with recounting narrative situations in which men were involved.⁵⁷ Personifications were especially apt for this task since they need not be bound to specific locations. An example in *Le miroir des vefves* is Fame (*Rumour*), who brings news and gossip from afar and is even able to enter enemy territory.

As for the didactic element, which is of course the primary function of school plays, personification has long been associated with educational purposes. It was a very effective tool for demarcating clearly between good and evil.⁵⁸ Fundamentally good characteristics and thus characters can be contrasted

1400–1700, *Intersections: Yearbook for Early Modern Studies* 20 (Leiden: 2012) 217–261, esp. 222.

53 Ramakers, “Dutch Allegorical Theatre” 130.

54 Bloemendal, *Spiegel van het dagelijks leven* 39.

55 Meeus, “Peeter Heyns’ *Le miroir des vefves*” 115.

56 Paxson J.J., “Personification’s Gender”, *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 16, 2 (1998), 149–179.

57 Meeus, “Peeter Heyns’ *Le miroir des vefves*” 126.

58 Spanily C., *Allegorie und Psychologie. Personifikationen auf der Bühne des Spätmittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit* (Münster: 2010) 293, 309–310.

with entirely bad ones, such as Compassion (*Compassion*) who is opposed to Cruelty in *Le miroir des meres*. Strikingly, many of the characters in Heyns's plays personify traits traditionally attributed to women, such as Chattiness (*Garrulité*).⁵⁹ By adding explanatory prologues and epilogues, Heyns could express how he wanted his audience to perceive these staged dichotomies and learn from them.⁶⁰ As illustrated by the character Benevolence (*Benevolence*) in *Le miroir des mesnageres*, Heyns wished to 'attract us to do good, and remove us from doing wrong' ('nous attirer à bien faire, & nous esloigner du mal'; fol. A4v). His pupils were expected to imitate the good characters and avoid becoming like the evil ones.⁶¹ The personifications, with their visible names referring to vices and virtues, themselves made sure that there would be no doubt about whose example should be followed, whose avoided. The fact that girls from his school were the actresses in the plays meant that they could, even more than their peers in the audience, experience for themselves the good or bad nature of the character they were impersonating. These actresses were confronted in a very direct manner with good or evil since they had to perform these characteristics, expressing them in word and deed.⁶²

By making the personifications not just reflections of abstract entities, but recognizable types of people with whom the audience was confronted in their daily lives, Heyns could present them as concrete examples of laudable or avoidable conduct. He calls attention to their familial status, for example, to show how a daughter should or should not behave towards her mother, her aunt, or her nieces. The use of both personifications and biblical figures in scenes of daily life ensured a high level of empathy from the audience, increasing the impact that the plays would have on them.⁶³ Furthermore, Heyns has used the plays to mirror how his charges should behave at different stages

59 Porteman, "Vlaams meisjestoneel" 103.

60 Spanily, *Allegorie und Psychologie* 295.

61 See also Llewellyn K.M., *Representing Judith in Early Modern French Literature* (London: 2014) chapter 5.

62 The concept of showing evil and bad behavior to young girls in order to teach them to avoid it was not in line with the doctrine of Juan Luis Vives, who deemed it harmful for them to even learn about evil things. Desiderius Erasmus had a more pragmatic viewpoint, accepting the confrontation of girls with examples of bad conduct if it fulfilled a useful purpose. Vives Juan Luis, *The Education of a Christian Woman*, trans. C. Fantazzi (Antwerp, Michiel Hillen van Hoochstraten: 1524; reprint, Londen: 2000) 55; Rummel E., *Erasmus on Women* (Toronto: 1996) 19.

63 Ramakers B., "Horen en zien, lezen en beleven. Over toogspelen in opvoering en druk", in Ramakers B. (ed.), *Spel in de verte: tekst, structuur en opvoeringspraktijk van het rederijkerstoneel: bijdragen aan het colloquium ter gelegenheid van het emeritaat van W.M.H.*

of womanhood, namely, as housewife, mother, or widow. Judith, to cite one example, is an epitome of the modest widow, whereas her antipode Worldly Widow does everything a woman should refrain from doing after the loss of a husband. Judith serves as an idealized model of behavior, both moral and practical, functioning for the audience as an example on which to model their daily lives.

In *Le miroir des mesnageres*, Heyns's choice for a non-biblical subject has allowed him to take this strategy even further. By focusing on two sisters from an Antwerp-like environment who are both married to drapery merchants, he could present his pupils with a realistic image of how their future life might look, and how to deal with the challenges that lay ahead. How to deal with a difficult husband or mother-in-law [Fig. 10.3]? How to reward or punish your children? Whether they should be breastfed or not? These and many other questions are answered by reference to the virtuous conduct of Susanne, the bad behavior of her sister Nemra, and their thoughts on these topics together with those of their wise grandmother Anne. In *Le miroir des mesnageres*, in a lengthy discussion between Nemra and Natural Law on household economy, the audience is even made aware of reasonable expenses for running a household: 'On meat, drinks and heating, fifty pounds per year' ('En viande, boisson & chauffage, cinquante livres par an'; fol. B4r). These trivial (but for the girls in the audience essential) lessons run parallel to general moral and religious instruction. Thus, when in the prologue of *Le miroir des vefves* Docility asks History (*Histoire*) about the character of the comedy to be presented—'spiritual or worldly?' ('spirituelle ou mondaine?')—History replies: 'Both one and the other' ('Et l'une & l'autre'; p. 7). The plays have become layered unities in which each stratum provides a specific type of instruction: biblical, religious, propagandistic, moral, ethical, societal, or practical.

The Reflection in the Mirror

The idea of imitation and, more specifically, that of mirroring which is present in the titles of the plays, is a very crucial one in the presentation of the three texts.⁶⁴ In the prologue and epilogue of *Le miroir des meres*, Audience (in the

Hummelen, special issue *Jaarboek de Fonteyne* 41–42 (1991–1992) (Ghent 1994) 129–165, esp. 161–162; Bussels, "Hoe overtuigt Coornherts *Comedie vande Rijckeman*" 36–37.

64 For a discussion of the increasing popularity of the image of the mirror in sixteenth-century literature and its connotations, see Grabes H. *The Mutable Glass: Mirror-Imagery in Titles and Texts of the Middle Ages and English Renaissance*, trans. G. Collier (Cambridge:

sense of Hearing) and Operation (in the sense of Acting) explain the importance of not only observing the performance, but of an active form of interiorizing it. First, the play has to be ‘heard with the exterior ears’ (‘ouïe des oreilles exterieures’) and then with the ‘interior ears of the heart’ (‘oreilles interieures du cœur’; pp. 3–4). The interior part of the play’s reception is a process of comparison and correction, which uses the play as a moral mirror. If the audience recognizes themselves in the evil characters, they should adapt their conduct in order to become a reflection of the good ones. Because of the use of personifications, the audience could compare themselves with the living embodiments of individual vices and virtues. Such mechanisms of ‘mirroring’, and the literary genres that propounded them, showing the conduct and morals of others, were considered necessary in the late Medieval and early modern period as ways of achieving self-knowledge and discerning one’s flaws.⁶⁵ This allowed people to correct their shortcomings by living a good life in a moral and religious sense.⁶⁶ The notion that outward impressions could be processed in the heart or soul, where the inner eyes and ears could contemplate them, was promoted in several rhetoricians’ plays as well.⁶⁷ The image of the mirror is intrinsic to theatre, since plays were appreciated as reflections of stories that show people in action.⁶⁸ Such visual representation was thought to have a strong impact on the audience, following the principle of *enargeia*. This impact made it easier to memorize the lessons to be learned. The theatrical play, combining the visual and the oral, was designed to produce a long-lasting impression on the girls in the audience: a case in point is the performance of Abigael Fagel in *Le miroir des mesnageres*, which ‘forever imprinted’ itself on ‘the memory of the Spectators and Auditors of that time’ (‘la memoire en demeurera à tousiours empreinte és Auditeurs & Spectateurs d’alors’; fol. A2r–v).

However, Heyns considers the printed text equally apt for this purpose. This idea is formulated in the preface of *Le miroir des mesnageres*, where Heyns writes:

1982); and Bange P., *Spiegels der christenen. Zelfreflectie en ideaalbeeld in laat-middeleeuwse en moralistisch-didactische traktaten* (Nijmegen: 1986).

65 Bange, *Spiegels der christenen* 11; Ramakers, “Horen en zien” 140–141, 160. The importance of drama as a mirror was also recognized in humanist education. Georgius Macropedius wrote in the dedication to his *Rebelles* and *Aluta* (1535) that drama was an appropriate tool to learn morals because it was a mirror of daily life. Worp, *Geschiedenis van het drama* 209.

66 Bange, *Spiegels der christenen* 252.

67 Ramakers, “Eloquent Presence” 225.

68 Grabes, *The Mutable Glass* 102–103; Ramakers, “Tonen en betogen” 201.

In the way that you, watching yourself in a beautiful and clear crystal mirror, you see the beauty of your faces, and the spots (if there are any) that disfigure them if they are not washed with clear and clean water, in that same way you shall see in this paper mirror, the perfection of your good habits, and their imperfections [...]. Now, if you recognize yourself as true Susannes, give infinite graces in return to the Sovereign Benefactor who offers all perfect gifts. But if, on the contrary (may God forbid it) you see yourself spotted with the vices of Nemra, do your best to purge yourself from them [...].⁶⁹

Both the performances and the written texts can thus function as mirrors. While the performed text functioned as a real life mirror, the printed text was a 'paper mirror'. In *Le miroir des vefves* Heyns openly acknowledged the usefulness of reading plays for a female audience in his preliminary texts, advising them to 'glance through them and consider them sometimes on their own' ('feuilleter & remirer quelque fois à part vous'; p. 4). Upon reading the texts, the visual memories of the audience could be triggered. For those who had been present at the performance, but also for other readers, the visual elements intrinsic to the play would stimulate the imagination, activating the reader's inner eyes, which explains how the printed text could extend or reactivate the learning process, even sans any explicit associations with an actual performative component.⁷⁰ After they had finished reading, the female readers could continue to profit from the works. In *Le miroir des mesnageres* an authoritative grandmother-figure tells her granddaughters and, indirectly, also the audience, to keep her lessons 'in your heart, ruminate them often in your mind, and digest them in your stomach of good action' ('en vostre coeur, ruminez-les en vostre entendement, & les digerez en vostre estomac de bon exercice'; fol. A7r).⁷¹ This rumination on written or staged works was initially promoted by the movement known as the *devotio moderna* and later adapted and appropriated by female readers of the early modern period, for whom an essentially

69 Heyns, *Le miroir des mesnageres* fol. A3r: 'Tout ainsi qu'en vous mirant en un beau & clair miroir de cristal, vous y voyez la beauté de voz faces, & les taches (quand il y en a) qui les enlaidissent, si elles ne sont lavées d'une eauë pure & nette : De mesme vous sera représentée en ce miroir de papier, la perfection de voz bonnes moeurs, & l'imperfection d'icelles. [...] Or, si vous vous y cognoissez pour vrayes Susannes, rendez en graces infinies au Souverain Donateur de tous dons parfaits : Mais si au contraire (Dieu ne vueille) vous vous voyez entachées des vices de la Nemra, efforcez vous de vous en purger'.

70 Ramakers, "Horen en zien" 131.

71 A similar idea is expressed in the epilogue of *Le miroir des meres* 83, where Operation speaks of the learned lessons as meat that should be ruminated.

non-critical, repetitive reflection upon texts such as Heyns's plays could be easily combined with their duties as housewives.⁷² Together with the method of learning by comparing oneself to things seen or read, an educative technique endorsed by Heyns, this contemplative process formed part of an accepted technique whereby laypeople could come closer to God.⁷³ Heyns's plays invite reflection on moral issues and also call for the translation of contemplative insights into good conduct, making both the performed and the printed plays useful tools for learning right and proper behavior. The printing of the plays, though possibly aimed at making them reusable in other schools, formed the last step in the instructive program of the texts. It allowed the female audience to read and reread the lessons learned during the performance, to 'ruminate' them, making the educational value of the ephemeral performances long lasting.

Contemporary Plays

The ways Heyns used the possibilities that personification allegory offered to teach moral, religious, and practical lessons both during the play and afterwards seem perfect for his girls' school. Can we recognize in any related texts the strategies discernible in Heyns's plays? Although female drama already had a long tradition in the sixteenth century, the scarcity of the traces it has left behind makes it difficult to establish links with the *Miroir* plays. We know from the elaborate and thorough work done by Elissa Weaver that convent theatre was rather common in female monasteries within and outside the Italic peninsula.⁷⁴ In fact, the oldest non-classical Western dramatic texts that have come down to us are the tenth-century plays written by the canoness

72 Mertens Th., "Lezen met de pen. Ontwikkelingen in het laatmiddeleeuws geestelijk proza", in Oostrom F.P. van – Willaert F. (eds.), *De studie van de Middelnederlandse letterkunde: stand en toekomst*, (Hilversum: 1989) 187–200, esp. 189–190; Green D.H., *Women Readers in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: 2007) 74–77. I am grateful to Sabrina Corbellini for her advice and suggestions on this topic.

73 Ramakers, "Horen en zien" 130–131; idem, "Discerning Vision: Cognitive Strategies in Cornelis Everaert's *Mary Compared to the Light* (c. 1511)", in Melion W.S. – Wandel L.P. (eds.), *Image and Imagination: The Early Modern Doctrine of the Pictorial Image*, *Intersections: Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture* 39 (Leiden – Boston: 2015) 264–312, esp. 272–276.

74 Weaver E.B., *Convent Theatre in Early Modern Italy: Spiritual Fun and Learning for Women* (Cambridge: 2002).

Hrotsvitha of Gandersheim.⁷⁵ Unfortunately, not much is known about the actual plays and performances themselves, nor about a possible link between conventual theatre and the theatrical usage of sixteenth-century schools for girls in the Low Countries. However, it is noteworthy that Weaver has been able to conclude that allegorical plays were used often in conventual drama, and that the parable of the five wise and five foolish virgins was especially popular.⁷⁶ Heyns wrote a play on the same theme, but it never made its way to the printing press and has not come down to us in manuscript.⁷⁷

It is even more striking that two contemporaries of Heyns both reworked the same parable in dramatic texts that they wrote specifically for girls. Abraham de Koning composed a *Maegden-spel* (*Virgin-play*) on the ten virgins in 1613, meant for staging by female actors.⁷⁸ It is one of two plays he wrote for girls,⁷⁹ and both are among the few examples of allegorical drama in De Koning's oeuvre. Another text on the wise and foolish virgins, *Vanden thien maeghden* (*On the ten virgins*) was written by Dirck Volckertsz. Coornhert in 1576.⁸⁰ It makes extraordinary use of personification by having a character named Hypocrisy (*Hypochrisis*) convince the five foolish virgins, each of whom personifies a sin, to disguise themselves as virtues. Like Heyns, Coornhert thus plays with the possibilities of personification-based allegory. Coornhert also wrote another play for girls that incorporates allegory. His *Der maeghdekens schole* (*Virgins School*) produced sometime between 1570 and 1575, portrays Christian Philosophy (*Christiana Philosophia*) who teaches her students Galilea and Iohanna about good and evil while the girls are trying to choose a husband.⁸¹ It is in many ways similar to Heyns's *Miroir des mesnageres*, where the sisters Susanne and Nemra are confronted with the same question. Both plays contain a curious mixture of allegorical and personal names. Furthermore, scholars have noted that the *Maeghdekens schole* contains 'fictional stories about individual people' and 'concretisation of action and characters', while also

75 Parente, *Religious Drama* 36–38.

76 Weaver, *Convent Theatre* 122.

77 Heyns, *Le miroir des mesnageres* fol. A3r.

78 Koning Abraham de, *Maegden-spel & Hagars vluchte ende weder-komste*, ed. G. van Eemeren – A. Lenferink-van Daal (Leuven: 1990).

79 Koning Abraham de, *De t'samensweringe Catalinae & Het tweede Dochters-Speeltjen*, ed. M.F. Bestebe – G. van Eemeren – H. de Smedt (Leuven: 1988).

80 Coornhert Dirck Volckertsz., *Wercken* [...], vol. 1 (Amsterdam, Jacob Aerts. Colom: 1630).

81 Coornhert, *Wercken*; Fleurkens A., *Stichtelijke lust. De toneelspelen van D.V. Coornhert (1522–1590) als middelen tot het geven van morele instructie* (Hilversum: 1994) 249.

aiming to be a 'general human instruction to virtue'.⁸² Coornhert has constructed his play for girls in the same way as Heyns, anchoring tangible examples from everyday life in a general allegorical foundation. This becomes evident as well in his *On the Ten Virgins*, where the wise virgins engage in laudable everyday activities, such as spinning wool, weaving, visiting the ill, and reading the bible, while the foolish ones dance, dine late and excessively, and play chess. Not only the virtues women should cultivate are visualized, but also the concrete activities in which they should engage daily.

Coornhert made use of personification allegory not only in his theatrical work, but also in his pictorial art. He was an engraver, active in the relatively new decorative art of etching images on copperplates. This method, which allowed far more detail than woodcuts, was relatively expensive but highly appreciated from the mid-sixteenth century onwards. Coornhert very frequently relied upon personification to convey instructive moralizing lessons in his many etchings and engravings.⁸³ Apparently, in the highly fashionable new genre of the copper etching and engraving, the use of personification-based allegory was considered neither inappropriate nor archaic. There is thus no reason to assume that it was considered an old-fashioned form of theatre. Personification continued to assume an important role in both the literary and the pictorial arts.

Conclusion

The use of personification in combination with everyday scenes from the lives or future lives of the students in the plays by Heyns and Coornhert served perfectly the main purpose of these dramatic texts, namely, educating young girls so they would become wise and virtuous, and ultimately, accomplished wives. It taught them the required biblical lessons and general morals and at the same time showed them how to behave within their household and how to approach relatives and strangers. Moreover, Heyns's interesting use of the metaphor of the mirror made the works suitable for a female cast and audience both during and after the performance. He demonstrated the importance of staging and of the afterlife of the play on paper for his female audience and readership, who

82 Fleurkens, *Stichtelijke lust* 253: 'fictionele geschiedenissen van individuele mensen', 'concretisering van handling en personages', 'algemeen menselijke opvoeding tot deugd'.

83 Veldman I.M., "Een serie allegorische prenten van Coornhert met een ontwerp-tekening van Maarten van Heemskerck", *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 19 (1971) 70–76; Veldman I.M., *De Wereld tussen Goed en Kwaad. Late prenten van Coornhert* (The Hague: 1990) 31–33; Bussels, "Hoe overtuigt Coornherts *Comedie vande Rijkeman*?"

could dwell on the lessons while engaged in their daily activities or during a quiet moment alone in their rooms.

The *Miroir* series fits very well with Heyns's taste for humanist educational novelties. He has simply given the standard humanist drama in five acts a twist by moving more in the direction of the rhetoricians' drama and assimilating characteristics associated with what has been called the history play. His *Miroir* plays are allegorical as well as fashionably contemporary; they are 'both one and the other', and the two characterizations—allegorical and fashion-forward—are in no sense contradictory. The works are innovative in that their five-act structure, choruses, and female casts place them on the frontlines of humanist educational drama—a connection made possible by Heyns's inventive use of personification-based allegory. But they are also innovative in their use of contemporary allegorical practices codified in rhetoricians' theatre, which in turn was closely aligned with classical and Neo-Latin humanist theatre; these practices must have appealed to Heyns because of their suitability for girls' drama. Through the use of personification, he stimulated learning on many levels while fostering feelings of empathy and emotional engagement with the staged characters. He catered for his students' needs, giving them the opportunity to discuss general and individual matters, factual and emotional experiences, religious and mundane concerns. In reaching both the actors and audience, Heyns's allegorical plays are in no sense trite. His personifications provided for everything an early modern educational work might be seen to require.

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Dirty from Behind, Pearly in Front: Lady World in Rhetoricians' Drama

Bart Ramakers

Several paintings and engravings have survived which show—in more or less detail—the outdoor stages on which the sixteenth-century Netherlandish *rederijkers* (rhetoricians) performed their farces (*kluchten*) and morality plays (*spelen van zinne* or *zinnespelen*). Only a few include detailed representations of play characters who either engage in a performance or are about to do so. The latter is the case with an engraving by Willem Isaacsz. Swanenburch after David Vinckboons, *Village Fair* [Fig. 11.1], in which we see an acting troupe approaching a typical rhetoricians' stage.¹ The chamber of rhetoric's lozenge-shaped blazon is being hung on the upper edge of the stage's backdrop; the company's drummer is clambering onto the proscenium in order to announce the play.

Behind him follow the play's actors. Without doubt, they constitute the cast of a morality play, since first come the *sinnekens*, the traditional pair of vices, who in a majority of *zinnespelen* tempt the mankind character into wrongdoing. Slightly to the side of the procession, we see the chamber's fool, who keeps the spectators at bay with his fool's bauble. In the center of the group following the *sinnekens*, positioned directly behind the fool, a female character steps forward; she is richly dressed and carries a small *globus cruciger* on her head. No doubt, this is a queen. Without further speculating about the content of the piece they are about to perform, it seems clear that the queen will take a leading role in it. In fact, this regally dressed character in all likelihood is Lady World, the epitome of all earthly temptation and evil. Not only does she look like representations of the world in allegorical prints, she also fits the description of this character in the stage directions and dialogue found in rhetoricians' plays. By analyzing her presence on stage, and comparing it to that in prints, we not only gain insight into contemporary conventions of theatrical form, that is, of staging and costume design, but also into conventions of theatrical meaning, that is, into the ways that dramatic personification enabled

1 For a full analysis of this scene, see Hummelen W.M.H., "Toneel op de kermis, van Bruegel tot Bredero", *Oud Holland* 103 (1989) 1–45, here 14–16.



FIGURE 11.1 *Willem Isaacs. Swanenburch after David Vinckboons, Village Fair with Goose Pulling (c. 1610). Detail. Engraving, 445 mm × 712 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1900-A-21966.*

playwrights rhetorically to impress and convey ideas as well as emotions concerning moral and theological concepts.

No fewer than fifteen rhetoricians' plays feature personifications of the world (see appendix 1). They date from the second half of the sixteenth and the early decades of the seventeenth century—the earliest datable example is from 1546, the latest from 1636—and were written and/or performed in cities and towns in both the southern and northern Netherlands.² We know the names of six of these plays' authors, three of whom created a (fairly) prolific oeuvre.³ Five of them—Rijssaert van Spiere, Jacob Dwinglo, Robert Lawet,

2 Antwerp in Brabant; Roeselare and Bruges in Flanders; Hasselt in Limburg; Brouwershaven in Zeeland; and Schiedam, Gouda, Haarlem, and Amsterdam in Holland.

3 We know nothing about an Antwerp priest named Clodius, hardly anything about Jacop Pieterse Rontsaet from Brouwershaven, but are reasonably well informed—be it mainly on the basis of their extant work—about Rijssaert van Spiere from Gouda; Jacob Dwinglo from Schiedam; Robert Lawet from Roeselare; Louris Jansz from Haarlem; and Abraham de Koning from Amsterdam. On some of them, see Porteman K. – Smits-Veldt M.B., *Een nieuw*

Louris Jansz, and Abraham de Koning—held prominent positions in their respective chambers, most of them, if not all, as *factors* or principal poets, who were responsible for writing their chambers' contributions to dramatic contests. In fact, examples have survived of such competition plays by the hand of each of them. Two plays in our corpus no doubt were written for a contest, three more might have been, indicating that the theme of the world accorded very well with the topical issues these were supposed to address. Furthermore, several playwrights link it to current debates on religion, associating the workings of the world not only with morally blameworthy behavior, but also with objectionable religious opinions, heresy, and persecution, or with religious discord in general. Apparently, in periods of social and religious tension, when it was unclear whom to trust or to believe, and the existence of an individual, a class, or even a whole community became uncertain or threatened, world imagery provided a means to think about, discuss, and, finally, deal with adversity and build resilience.⁴

Paradigms of Vice and Virtue

Whereas some work has been done on renderings of the world in early-modern Netherlandish art,⁵ virtually nothing has been written about its representation in contemporary rhetoricians' theatre. In the plays to be discussed, personifications of the world (as well as of the vices) and those who successfully resisted them functioned as paradigms of vice and virtue, respectively. Among the latter, the Christian Knight was the most important. Some of these plays carry humanist and Renaissance traits, in their dramaturgy and poetics, in their ideology, and—possibly inspired by prints—in the portrayal of their personifications as well.⁶

vaderland voor de muzen. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1560–1700 (Amsterdam: 2008) *passim*.

4 Some authors are known for their religious convictions. Whereas Louris Jansz advocated a non-doctrinal, humanist kind of Christianity, Robert Lawet, Abraham de Koning, and Rijssaert van Spiere were more or less outspoken Protestants. The latter two were refugees from Flanders, who had settled in Holland in order to freely express their Calvinist faith.

5 Jongh E. de, "Vermommingen van Vrouw Wereld in de 17^{de} eeuw", *Album amicorum J.G. van Gelder* (The Hague: 1973) 198–207.

6 Some of the playwrights were acquainted with artists and/or made their money in the print industry themselves. Louris Jansz personally knew Dirk Volckertszoon Coornhert, who himself wrote many allegorical plays. See Boele A.H., *Leden van één lichaam. Denkbeelden over armen, armenzorg en liefdadigheid in de Noordelijke Nederlanden 1300–1650*, Middelleeuwse

Representations of the world in both plays and prints constituted ethical and theological discourses of a very fundamental kind. They transformed—or, better, heightened—the tension and conflict between the good and the bad, the true and the false that lay at their basis, into a cosmic, eschatological battle, with the world as the advance front rank, the battleground, so to speak, between heaven and hell, where God and Satan fought for man's soul. From a theological point of view, the latter enjoyed a clear advantage on earth, both tactically and strategically. Not only did he, through the deadly vices, hold the most advantageous positions along the route of man's salvation, from where he could snipe at his targets; the latter, weakened by original sin, was extremely vulnerable to the former's attacks, easily giving in to short-term pleasure in the here and now instead of staying focused on long-term—indeed perpetual—happiness in the hereafter.

In concert with this view of the world as the time and place of arrant wrongdoing, the need emerged to personify this wrongdoing and its attendant errors, to create the image of a human character who embodied all the faults the world was thought to provoke. Inspired by a number of biblical passages, the epistles of Paul in particular, monastic authors created the character of *Mundus*, the prince of the world, who despite the word's male gender, eventually came to be thought of as female, as Lady World, probably because of the misogynistic association of women with the low and the bodily, especially in monastic culture.⁷ It was this female personification, a mixture of 'deceitful mistress' ('betrügerische Herrin') and 'demonic deviless' ('dämonisches Teufelsweib'), that became successful in medieval and early-modern art and drama.⁸

This chapter assesses the various manifestations of the world, especially Lady World, in rhetoricians' theatre, with respect both to outer apparel—costume and attributes—and to inner self—all that they signify—as bodied forth by this and other personifications through speech and behavior. The names and appearances of the personifications that surround World—especially those who act with the intent to further his/her cause—add to his/her signifying function. My approach consists of mapping the rhetoricians' stage as it literally and symbolically framed World's appearance, and listing some of the predominant, mainly biblical metaphors which constitute the plays' plot (either in the form of real action or in the guise of tableaux vivants).

Studies en Bronnen 143 (Hilversum: 2013) 205–206. Abraham de Koning was a print seller. The latter, like Jacob Dwinglo, introduced Renaissance elements in his plays.

7 Stammeler W., *Frau Welt. Eine mittelalterliche Allegorie*, Freiburger Universitätsreden, Neue Folge 23 (Freiburg in der Schweiz: 1959) 19, 35, *passim*. Also see De Jongh, "Vermommungen" 199.

8 Stammeler, *Frau Welt* 68.

The latter strongly prompt World's stage manifestation and contextualize his/her meaning.

Thus, this chapter takes a phenomenological look at personifications, concentrating on their appearances, and on the experiences they may have served to engender. This implies—paraphrasing Jean Bocharova—that the audience's understanding of the concept of the world was just as strongly influenced by poetry and imagery as it was by theological argument.⁹ As a consequence, the poetry and imagery of the plays will be presented—cited, paraphrased, and described—as fully as possible. Occasionally, reference will also be made to prints, not only with the aim of clarifying what contemporary spectators might have seen, but also to illuminate the moral and theological context in which personifications of the world functioned.¹⁰ Rhetoricians' drama catered to comparable audiences as did contemporary prints. Like these, they provided material for intellectual reflection and discussion. However, unlike prints or any other mode of communication, drama was able aurally and visually to signify simultaneously by means of living bodies, thus creating an opportunity for *aisthesis*: perception through the senses. The production of heightened sensory experience was one of the chief effects ascribed to *prosopopoeia* in ancient rhetorical theory. Indeed, rhetoric as a whole was seen as an instrument of *aisthesis*. Consequently, performances of *zinnespelen* came very close to classical rhetoric's ideal of public eloquence.

One biblical metaphor employed in the plays to be discussed is that of the Christian Knight from *Ephesians* 6:13–17, who, clad in spiritual armor, fights against World. In several plays their confrontation takes place with God and Satan watching from heaven and hell respectively, or heavenly and hellish scenes take center stage after the battle has ended, providing the eschatological perspective so characteristic of World's appearance. This perspective also explains the dramatization of no less than four motifs from the *Apocalypse* of St. John. The first two are closely related, though diametrically opposed *qua* moral significance: the (positive) sun-clothed woman from *Revelation* 12:1–5 and the (negative) woman seated upon the dragon—the whore of Babylon—from *Revelation* 17:3–6. The third motif concerns the sacrifice of the Lamb as referred to in *Revelation* 5:1–7, the fourth the wedding supper of the Lamb from *Revelation* 19:7–9, which enabled playwrights to contrast the earthly banquets given by World with the heavenly ones envisioned by John. The banquet or

9 See *supra* p. 58.

10 Reversely, the understanding of the prints might be enhanced through knowledge of the plays. However, this chapter does not aim at analyzing the representations of the world and related concepts in early-modern Netherlandish prints in any detail.

supper functioned as a metaphor for the union of the righteous with God (Christ's last supper, of course, being the most significant example). Besides the heavenly suppers from *Revelation*, one parable about a banquet was also dramatized: that of The Master of the House from *Luke* 14:16–24.

The Bible offered playwrights ample opportunity for both creative and hermeneutical allegory. Personifications like the Christian Knight, Lady World herself, as well as a number of characters in her retinue, were inspired by metaphorical or prosopopoeic usage in Scripture. As we shall see later, such parables as The Master of the House were further allegorized by turning their featured characters into personifications. In some *zinnespelen*, personifications themselves engage in the hermeneutics or *allegoresis* of biblical scenes within which they are featured; alternatively, such scenes are enacted before them as plays within the play, or as tableaux vivants. Such plays employ or, better, activate the motif of the disputation or debate, one of many actional formats used in *zinnespelen*.¹¹ Other such motifs are the pilgrimage or journey, the visit to the inn or tavern, and the battle. All fit into a long tradition of allegorical writing, of morality drama in particular, which in the course of the sixteenth century acquired new, topical potential.

A typical *zinnespel* featured a number of stock characters.¹² Two of them have already been mentioned: the *sinnekens*, the traditional pair of vices, who lead the mankind character astray. The latter, of course, is the main protagonist. His moral and religious behavior, his questions and doubts, are central to the play's action. He is innocent at first, then sins, next becomes remorseful and, finally, seeks to appease God's wrath, whereby his inner and outer deliberations are carefully visualized through personification of the faculties and forces that constitute them. The trail of sin is blazed by the *sinnekens* who lead him to usually female characters, who are themselves personifications of sinful living or wrongful thinking. These alluring women, whose temptations consist of drinking, eating, and fornicating in an inn or tavern, carry names just as ominous as the place whence they await their prey. Finally, he either exits with his female friend(s), suggesting they shall sleep together, and then returns

11 Werner Hellmich employs the term 'allegorical stage action' ('allegorische Bühnenhandlung') to describe such motifs. Hellmich W., *Die Allegorie im französischen Theater des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 1: *Das religiöse Theater*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie 156 (Tübingen: 1976) 163–233.

12 On this genre, see Ramakers B., "Dutch Allegorical Drama: Tradition and Conceptual Approach", in Strietman E. – Happé P. (eds.), *Urban Theatre in the Low Countries, 1400–1625*, Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe 12 (Turnhout: 2006) 127–147.

when summoned to account for his misdemeanors, or he may, whilst still on stage, find himself called to task for his sinful activities and urged to repent.

Typical, too, is the association—through naming or actual use—of the openings in the stage's backdrop (and the spaces behind them) with particular characters. Characters enter and exit the stage via these openings, which often carry allegorical names (see below). The same is true for (parts of) their costumes and for the most common prop of all: thrones or chairs. Their names express the state or disposition of the character that sits in them. The changing of clothes and seats is the standard way to exemplify the moral or intellectual transformation—for better or for worse—that the mankind character undergoes. Thus, thematic distinctions expressed by the personifications' names, are further specified, verbally as well as visually.

One play, the *Mirror of the Course of This World*, may serve as an example. Its action comes closest to the *zinnspel*'s standard pattern. Its mankind character, Innocent (*Den Onnoselen*), on the advice of Truth (*Waarheid*), seeks Faith (*Geloof*) and marries her. He then heads for the House of Grace (*Huys van Gracie*; fol. A5v)—heaven—where he hopes to be reunited with Faith. However, the *sinnekens* Lust (*Wellust*) and Doubt (*Twijfel*), World's servants, tempt him into visiting their master, who resides in the House of Sins (*Huys van Zonden*; fol. B4v). They first turn him into 'a great gentleman' ('een groot cadet'; fol. A7r).¹³ In this play, World does not seduce Innocent himself—he is male—but leaves this task to his daughter, Treasure (*tSchadt*), who nevertheless is described in the same terms as many female versions of World. She is 'expensively dressed' ('costelijck toeghemaeckt'; fol. A1v). At the height of his pleasure, Innocent's inner voice, Gnawing Conscience (*Knagende Consciency*), calls upon him from on high, urging Innocent to change his ways. He is led to a priest, called Scripture (*Schrijftuer*), who initiates Innocent's second metamorphosis, this time into a true believer.¹⁴

In an etching by Jacques Horenbault, *The Haystack* [Fig. 11.2]¹⁵—a catalogue of human errors and vices—the centrally positioned couple provides a visual

13 He is put on a 'doublet' ('palsrock'), meaning 'arrogance' ('hooveerdicheydt'), a 'hood' ('bonnet'), meaning 'pride' ('hoochmoedt'), a 'robe' ('tabberd'), meaning 'ambition' ('eerghiericheydt') and a 'sword' ('zwaard'), meaning 'force' ('ghewelt'). *Mirror of the Course of This World* fol. B1r.

14 His eyes are salved with 'light' ('licht'), after which he receives a 'garment' ('cleet'), called 'honesty' ('recht wt'), a bonnet, called 'meekness' ('sachtmoedicheydt'), and a doublet called 'simplicity' ('simplheyt'). Ibid. fol. C2v.

15 *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, ca. 1450–1700*, vol. 1X: *Heer-Kuyt*, ed. F.W.H. Hollstein (Amsterdam: 1953) 146 (no. 1).



FIGURE 11.2 Jacques Horenbault, *The Haystack* (1608). Detail. Etching, 394 mm × 518 mm, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-48.961.

parallel for the characters Innocent and Treasure in the aforementioned play. The richly dressed squire at the left, with a rapier, lute, and hourglass (suggesting the quick passage of time), perfectly matches the Innocent-turned-gentleman in the *Mirror of the Course of This World*. The lavishly dressed lady at the right matches the description of Treasure. The inscriptions below them refer to the theme of the world and its eschatological connotations.¹⁶ The hand mirror with peacock feathers indicates that the lady is Vanity, who here offers hay or grass, symbol of the brevity of life.

16 Left: 'Directing one's senses to worldly pleasure / is a waste of time, and [leads to] eternal torment' ('Syn sinnen tot lust des weerels stellen / is tydverlies, en een eeuwich quellen'); right: 'Why are you so proud, in all your voluptuous boasting? / Think about the fire of hell, which awaits you' ('Waerom sydij soo fier, in al u wulpsch berommen? / Dijnck op dat helsche vier, welck u sal comen').

Stage Appearances

Dramatic personifications affected their audiences first and foremost visually, through outer apparel and presence—both social (rank, profession) and spatial—as well as through the character configurations they created on stage. All three elements were supposed to conform to whatever character type the personification bodied forth. In case of World, outer apparel, presence, and configuration were geared towards conveying abundant but treacherous beauty, riches, and power.

It should come as no surprise that in some plays one of the *sinnekens* performs the role of World. World's evil character is already evident from the names of the accompanying *sinnekens*: Flesh (*tVleesch*) in *The Master of the House* and World's Lover (*sWerelts Beminder*) in *The Christian Knight*.¹⁷ In the remaining plays, World is accompanied by a separate pair of *sinnekens* or by other personifications of vicious intent and malicious behavior who are subordinate to her or him, both thematically (in terms of the concepts they represent) and dramatically (in terms of the actions they perform). Together they constitute a broad range of connotations linked to the concept of the world as staged in early-modern drama.¹⁸ In one play, *Man's Mind Seduced by the Flesh*, the *sinnekens* are called Devil (*Duvel*) and Flesh (*tVleesch*). While World is 'a man fancily dressed', Devil has partly covered his demonic appearance ('half duvel, half bedect'; p. 608); Flesh is dressed 'like a harlot' ('*u*pt huers'). This constellation of characters is based on the triad of the world, the devil, and the flesh from *Ephesians* 2:1–3.¹⁹ It entered into theological and devotional writings in the medieval period, and was eventually incorporated

17 The *sinnekens*' sex is never explicitly stated, except in these two plays. According to their character lists, World is dressed 'as a woman' ('als een vrouwe'; *The Master of the House* p. o) and as 'a fair woman' ('een schoon vrouwe'; *The Christian Knight* fol. A3v), respectively. Apparently, the playwrights clearly conceived of World as female and wanted her to look feminine. In fact, in *The Christian Knight*, the *sinnekens* World and World's Lover form an amorous couple.

18 *Those Who Trust in Comfort*: Doubt (*Twijfel*) and Despair (*Wanhoop*); *Apocalypse 12, Verse 1*: Heresy (*Ketterij*) and Tyranny (*Tyrannye*); *Wisdom's Invitation*: Foolish Doctrine (*Dwase Leer*) and Sovereign Thinking (*Eigen Vernuft*); *Simple Man and Illusion of Virtue*: False Persuasion (*Valsche Perswacij*) and Eye-struck Beauty (*Schoon voor Ogen*); *Fidelity*: Cunning Stratagem (*Listich Vondeken*) and Treacherous Mind (*Bedrochelyck Geest*).

19 Although the devil is missing, the pairing of World and Flesh in *The Master of the House* also seems inspired by this passage.

into protestant religious thinking as well, for example in question 127 of the Heidelberg Catechism.²⁰

In three plays we encounter another cluster of characters taken from the Bible, that of the world and the three temptations from *John* 2:16. Not only does this passage provide material for the opposition between God and Devil, heaven and world, life eternal and life temporal, it also puts the three temptations in a position of dependency and servitude as regards World.²¹ By personifying them on stage, letting them play the role of her subordinates, the playwrights enabled the audience to see what a worldly life entailed. In fact, given the association with the deadly vices, they more or less stand for all seven of them.²²

20 <http://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs/confessions/heidelberg-catechism>, accessed June 7, 2015.

21 On rhetoricians' plays dramatizing the three temptations, see Ramakers B., "Die Welt und die drei Begierden im *Rederijker*-Drama", in Meier C. – Ramakers B. – Beyer H. (eds.), *Akteure und Aktionen. Figuren und Handlungstypen im Drama der Frühen Neuzeit*, Symbolische Kommunikation und gesellschaftliche Wertesysteme 23 (Münster 2008) 81–126.

22 In *All the World's Pleasure Is Idle* the three temptations are male and are called by World her 'princes' ('princhieren'; *ibid.* p. 7): Lust of the Flesh (*Lust des Vleeschs*), Lust of the Eyes (*Lust der Ooghen*), and Pride of Life (*Hoochmoet des Levens*). In *Schiedam: Morality Play in Haarlem, 1606*, they are female, acting as ladies in waiting of a sumptuously dressed female World, carrying slightly different names in Dutch: *Wellust des Vleesch*, *Begeerlickheyt der Oogen*, and *Grootsheyt des Levens*. In *The Prodigal Son* only two of three appear. World features as the landlady of the inn where the protagonist wastes his inheritance. Lust of the Flesh (*Wellust des Vleeschs*) and Lust of the Eyes (*Begherlickheyt der Ooghen*) arouse him through kissing and touching, while the landlord Extravagance (*Overdaet*) gets him drunk. It is through their relation to World rather than through their names that the characters Reckless Blossoming (*Roeckeloos Opwassen*), Untamed Sensuality (*Ongetemde Wulpsheijt*), and Fleeting Wealth (*Vlujende Weelde*) in *World's Foolish Banquet* remind us of the three temptations, too. They present themselves as life's governing principles and act as World's servants. Although not literally named after them, the three temptations also seem to have been the model for the characters Vainglory (*Hoovaerdije*), Vanity (*Ijdelheidt*), and Pride (*Grootsheid*) in *Wisdom's Invitation*. Even when not personified, their association with the World is so strong that they easily pop up in descriptions of her. In *The Christian Knight* fol. Ag^r, the mankind character, Human Race (*tMenschelijck Geslacht*), says of her: 'In you is lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh. / Agony abides at your court. / To pride of life [you are] prone' ('In u is lust der ooghen, 'tveesch begheerlijckheyt. / Verseerlijckheyt is in u hof ghelegen. / Tot hoocheyt des levens zijt ghenegen'. And in *Simple Man and Illusion of Virtue* ll. 1181–1182, World shoots three arrows at the mankind character called 'Lust of the Flesh [...] and lust of the eyes [...] with pride of wealth' ('Wellust des vleijs [...] en lust der ooghen [...] met hoemoet op rijckdom').

In *World's Foolish Banquet*, World is dressed as a fool and behaves as such. It—this World is bisexual—comes on stage ‘dressed as a woman below and as a man above, with a fool's cap with ass's ears on his head, and walking in slippers’.²³ It is alternatively referred to by other characters as ‘he’ (‘hij’) or ‘she’ (‘sij’).²⁴ In all other plays, World is either male or female. In a majority—ten against four—this character is a she. All the male versions, without exception, are described as being richly dressed.²⁵ The same is true for all the female versions, whereby the description of her appearance in some cases extends beyond her clothing to include her rank and status. Thus, she is not just called a woman or demoiselle, who happens to be dressed luxuriously, but she is also portrayed as beautiful and triumphant. In three plays she calls herself (or is called) a queen—Lady World.²⁶

In *The Christian Knight* World is described as ‘half Devil, half Human’ (‘half Duyvel, half Mensche’; fol. D1v), but then this World is one of two examples in which she functions as a *sinneken*, a type often portrayed as half-demon or half-animal, as in the left one of the pair in Swanenburch's print [Fig. 11.1]. However, the *sinneken* in our play conceals her true nature by hiding the tell-tale signs behind her back. This way of thinking about and representing the

23 *World's Foolish Banquet* fol. 122r: ‘gecleet beneen als een vrouw ende boven als een man, met een gecxs capjen met ooren op thoof, ende gaet op platijnen’.

24 Ibid. fols. 120v–121r, *passim*. World's guise as a bisexual fool seems an attempt by its author, Louris Jansz, to represent the foolhardiness of all of humanity, both male and female.

25 *Mirror of the Course of This World* fol. A1v: ‘a man costly dressed’ (‘een man costelijck toeghemaeckt’); *Fidelity* p. 143: ‘a stately man, costly dressed’ (‘een Staetelyck man, costelyck gecleet’); *Man's Mind Seduced by the Flesh* p. 600: ‘a man fancily dressed’ (‘Een mans personage chierlijk ghecleet’); *Simple Man and Illusion of Virtue* fol. 103v: ‘the World, very exquisitely dressed’ (‘Die Werlt, seer heerlick gecleet’). In this play World is not explicitly called male, but his sex appears from addressing his attendants as ‘fellows’ (‘gesellen’; *ibid.* l. 869) and ‘friends’ (‘vrienden’; *ibid.* ll. 946, 1066) and calling on each of them to prepare ‘his weapons’ (‘sijn wapenen’; *ibid.* l. 951).

26 *All the World's Pleasure Is Idle* p. 1: ‘a woman costly dressed’ (‘een vrouwe costelick ghecleedt’), ‘a woman conspicuously dressed’ (‘een vrouwen personaijghe uutwendich ghecleet’; *ibid.* p. 7), ‘queen’ (‘conighinne’; p. 9); *Those Who Trust in Comfort* fol. 122r: ‘a woman costly dressed’ (‘een vrou costelijck gecleet’); *The Cornerstone* fol. 105r: ‘a triumphant woman’ (‘een triumpfhante vrouw’); *ibid.* l. 199: ‘in beautiful red’ (‘schoon root couleurich’); *Reckless Life* p. 195: ‘a woman dressed as a demoiselle’ (‘een vrou gekleet op een joffrous’); *Schiedam: Morality Play in Haarlem, 1606* fol. M1r: ‘A mighty and magnificent queen’ (‘Een machtige en costelijcke coninginne’); *ibid.* fols. N2v–N3v: ‘honorable queen’ (‘waerde Coningin’), ‘her’, ‘your Majesty’ (‘hare’, ‘dyne Majesteyt’); *Wisdom's Invitation* p. 251: ‘the queen’ (‘de koninginne’); *The Christian Knight* fol. A3v: ‘a beautiful woman’ (‘een schoone Vrouwe’); *Apocalypse 12, Verse 1* fol. G2r: ‘a woman’ (‘een vrou’).

world had a long tradition.²⁷ The signs may have been attached to or painted on her costume. One character says about her: 'She maybe fair of face at the front, / But the lethal flash scares me, / Which she carries behind her back.'²⁸ Another remarks that she is 'Dirty from behind, pearly in front' ('Van achter bekackt, voren bepeerelt'; fol. B5r), thus exemplifying the element of false pretense associated with the world.

How such costumes exemplifying the identity of personifications looked like, may be deduced from the prints recording the entries in the Haarlem contest of 1606. The characters in these allegorical processions, through order, costume, gesture, and a minimum of text (either spoken or on banderoles or name tags), together presented the answer to a preset question. The prints form a catalogue, as it were, of all the visual means available to express allegorical content, not just masks, hats, and attributes, but also images and symbols painted on or applied to costumes [Figs. 11.3 & 11.9].²⁹ We recognize such an illustration—though sketchy—on the dress of Lady World in an anonymous print published by Johannes Baptista Vrints the Elder, *Dance around the World* [Fig. 11.4].³⁰

The *sinneken* World in *The Master of the House* is described as wearing a 'broadcloth headscarf, [...] [with] white silk caps underneath'³¹—maybe as part of a nun's habit?³² That the *sinneken* World in *The Christian Knight* had a ladylike appearance—at least in front—becomes clear from her own words, too. She describes herself as the 'beautiful, perfect World. / Wearing pearls to my empowerment',³³ and calls Satan her 'husband' ('man'; fol. A5r). (This makes

27 Stammeler, *Frau Welt* 46.

28 *The Christian Knight* fol. A8v: 'Sy is wel schoon van voren int ghesichte, / Maer die dootlijcke schichte maect my vertsaeght, / Die sy achter haren rugghe draeght'.

29 On the Haarlem entries of 1606, see Ramakers B.A.M., "De *Const* getoond. De beeldtaal van de Haarlemse rederijkerswedstrijd van 1606", *Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 49 (1998) 129–183.

30 It has been attributed to Pieter Baltens. Hollstein's *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, ca. 1450–1700*, vol. 1: *Abry-Berchem*, ed. F.W.H. Hollstein (Amsterdam: 1949) 83 (no. 7).

31 *The Master of the House* p. 2: 'thoofcleet int ruwelaeckin, [...] daeronder witte zijden huijkins'.

32 Later on she is greeted with the words 'Tell me, serpent's wear' ('Wel, goede slanghe dracht'; p. 40). At the end a stage direction describes both *sinnekens* in this play as 'dressed hypocritically, each with a paternoster in their hands' ('Ipocritich ghecleedt elck met een paternoster in de handen'; *ibid.* p. 49).

33 *The Christian Knight* fol. A4v: 'schoone, ydonne Weerelt. / Gaende ghepeerelt om mijn verstercken'.



FIGURE 11.3 *Gnawing Conscience* (Vroegende Conscientie), *Deadly Scare* (Doodelick Verschricken), and *Hellish Suffering* (Helsche Liden). *Entry of the chamber of Haastrecht in Haarlem, 1606. Detail. Engraving. In Const-thoonende ivweel, by de loflijcke stad Haerlem, ten versoecke van Trou moet blijcken, in 't licht gebracht* (Zwolle: Zacharias Heyns: 1607). Groningen, University Library, uklu 'EPEPE 251 A.

World's Lover, her fellow-*sinneken*, in a way her adulterous lover.) Apparently, Rijssaert van Spiere, the author of this play, conceived of World as the not so faithful wife in a powerful, if not royal marriage.

Although she is only explicitly called a 'queen' in three plays, the descriptions in these and many other plays of a beautiful and radiantly dressed Lady World, suggest that she entered the stage in queen-like apparel, which must have included a crown or a *globus cruciger*, as in the print by Swanenburch and the one published by Vrints, and most other prints that feature her. The authors of those three plays in which she is explicitly called a 'queen'—Robert Lawet, Jacob Dwinglo, and Abraham de Koning—might have consciously modelled their World after pictorial representations. All three were well-educated and accomplished authors. In *Schiedam: Morality Play in Haarlem, 1606*, by Jacob Dwinglo, World complains about the mankind character, whom she holds responsible for the harm done to 'our Crown' ('onse Croon'; fol. N4r),



FIGURE 11.4 Anonymous (published by Johannes Baptista Vrints the Elder), *Dance around the World* (c. 1600). Engraving, 329 mm × 414 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1906-4301.

and who is unwilling to bow under 'our Sceptre' ('ons Schepter')—two items of regalia she probably wears on her head and holds in her hand, respectively.

We see a crown—though not on her head, but lying at her feet on a bundle of hay inscribed 'vanity' ('vanitas')—in *Dance around the World* [Fig. 11.4]. We also discern the end of a peacock feather emerging from under her dress (left). The soap bubble in World's left hand is an allusion to the transitoriness of life; the inscription makes explicit reference to it.³⁴ A fool with a mask in one hand—signifying false pretense—hides under her robe. How Lady World was visualized may further be gauged from three prints to be discussed in more detail below. Two portray the Christian Knight—one by Pieter Serwouters

34 The first three lines read: 'Och veele die hier dansen en maecken iolijt groot, / Om dat haer die Weerelt soo schoonen saecken biedt: / Ten is maer een bobbele, vol wints, die u verblijdt bloot' ('Ah, many who dance here and make great cheer, / Because the World offers them such beautiful things: / It is but a bubble, full of air, which enchants you').



FIGURE 11.5 Pieter Serwouters after David Vinckboons, *The Christian Knight* (1614). Engraving, 297 mm × 358 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1882-A-6076.

[Fig. 11.5], the other by Hieronymus Wierix [Fig. 11.6].³⁵ The third, again by Wierix, is titled *Four Enemies of Righteousness* [Fig. 11.7].³⁶ We see a small *globus cruciger* on World's head in all three prints, along with a range of other objects: a money chest, a so called *stokbeurs* (several purses fastened to a wooden handle), a feather-framed hand mirror, and a chalice or cup, that might very well be a reference to the 'golden cup [...] full of abominations and filthiness of her

35 *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450–1700, The Wierix Family*, collab. Z. van Ruyven-Zeman – M. Leesberg; ed. J. Van der Stock J. – M. Leesberg, 10 vols. (Rotterdam: 2004) LXVI, 134–135 (no. 1795).

36 *Ibid.* 25, 38 (no. 1700).



FIGURE 11.6 Hieronymus Wierix after Maarten de Vos, *The Christian Knight* (1563–before 1619). Engraving, 298 mm × 388 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-67.023.

fornication' held by the whore of Babylon, as described in *Revelation* 17:4. In *All the World's Pleasure Is Idle*, by Robert Lawet, World once again holds a cup:

Here will be installed a table richly decorated with silver, at which sits a female character conspicuously dressed, called the World, a cup named Impiety in her hand, the drink within Idleness. With her [are] three men, namely Lust of the Flesh, Lust of the Eyes, and Pride of Life, respectively, according to the text of 1 *John* 2, etc.³⁷

37 *All the World's Pleasure Is Idle* p. 7: 'Hier zal gherecht staen een tafele zeer costelick verchiert met zilverwerck, waer an zitten zal een vrouwen personaijghe uutwendich ghecleet ghenampt de Werelt, eenen copt in de handen ghenampt zijnde Ongheeloove, den dranck daerin Ijdelheyt. Bij haer drie mans personaijghe te weten Lust des vleeschs, lust der ooghen ende hoochmoet des levens, achtervolghende den tecxt 1 Johannis 2 etc.'

façade, as in the print of the stage used in the Haarlem contest of 1606 [Fig. 11.8]. Such screens usually counted no more than three openings on the first story and one on the second. The latter was generally called the 'throne', since scenes set in heaven were usually situated here. This space and those below were also used for showing tableaux vivants. Nameplates mounted on the upper edge of the screen helped to identify the allegorical meaning of these spaces and of the entrances leading to them. Equally fixed banderoles containing Scriptural references or complete or abbreviated biblical quotations were sometimes attached as well, to facilitate understanding and interpretation of the tableaux vivants.

The two plays by Rijssaert van Spiere provide a wealth of detail on staging. Not only did he ask for larger stages with more entrances than average, he also peopled them with more characters. At the beginning of both plays he lists the names of the five adjacent openings in the stage screen. In *The Christian Knight*, four openings were needed. From the audience's left to right: the Throne of Heaven (*sHemels Throon*; fol. A3v); the Valley of Sorrow (*tDal van Weene*); World's Bower (*sWerelts Pryeel*); and the Throne of Hell (*Throon der Hellen*). The stage of *Apocalypse 12, Verse 1*, contained an additional opening: God's Kingdom (*Gods Rijk*; fol. G2r); Patmos (*Pathmos*); Jerusalem; Rome (*Roma*); and Hell (*Hel*). The opposition between heaven and hell is evident from their positions at the outer left and right ends of the stage—at the farthest distance from each other. In *The Christian Knight*, the intermediate entries have a more positive or more negative connotation, depending on how close to or how far from heaven they are.³⁸ In *Apocalypse 12, Verse 1* the intermediate entries seem neutral at first sight. After all, they do not have allegorical names. But this changes once we realize that its author was a staunch Calvinist, who associated Rome with the Catholic Church. It is through this entrance that the *sinnekens* Heresy and Tyranny enter. That is why Rome borders on Hell.

The stage used for Van Spiere's plays apparently was a rectangular, single-floor construction, wide enough to create up to five juxtaposed entrances. As noted above, the average rhetoricians' stage, such as the one used in Haarlem, counted no more than three openings [Fig. 11.8]. *Schiedam: Morality Play in Haarlem, 1606* was performed on it. In this play, the middle entrance serves as the House of Sorrow (*'t Huys des Droefheys*). Those to the left and right are

38 The Valley of Sorrow—a life full of hardship, suffering, and sorrow—lay next to its likely reward: Heaven. World's Bower—a life dominated by the desires and promptings of the flesh—was situated next to its likely punishment: Hell.



FIGURE 11.8 *The Haarlem stage of 1606. Engraving. Const-thoonende ivweel, by de loflijcke stad Haerlem, ten versoecke van Trou moet blijken, in 't licht gebracht (Zwolle: Zacharias Heyns: 1607). Groningen, University Library, uklu 'EP'EP E 251 A.*

called the Court of Grace (*'t Hof der Genaden*) and the Court of Darkness (*'t Hof der Duysternissen*)—again signifying good and bad, heaven and hell.³⁹

When plays were performed on stages with a 'throne', the opposition between world and heaven was spatially exemplified by situating these spheres right above each other. The clearest indication of this staging procedure can be found in *All the World's Pleasure Is Idle*, in which World describes herself as sitting at a table underneath heaven's throne.⁴⁰ This opposition becomes clear in a gripping manner when at the end of the play Christ is shown right above her. A stage direction describes the scene as follows: 'Here Christ shall sit [in a scene] called God's right judgment, on a rainbow, as at [the time of] judgment'⁴¹—a well-known iconographical theme. A comparable scenography is created in *Those Who Trust in Comfort*, whereby the (middle) space on proscenium level is called 'this bower of corrupted nature' ('dit prijel van verdorven natuer'; fol. 123r), that is, the dwelling place of World, while the space on the floor above is God's 'throne' ('thron'; fol. 133r), where towards the end of the play God the Father himself appears.

Making an Entrance

Just as in the prints, Lady World's appears both royal and grand on stage, not just with regard to her apparel, but also her entrance, presence, and movement. *Schiedam: Morality Play in Haarlem, 1606* describes her as a 'mighty and magnificent queen', her retinue consisting of personifications of the three

39 In the *Mirror of the Course of This World*, World operates from the House of Sins (*Huys van Sonden*), since that is what a worldly life entailed. Another entry is called Clear Conscience (*Gheruste Conscientie*). Towards the end, a 'watchman' ('wachter'), called Gnawing Conscience (*Knagende Conscientie*), sings a song 'from above' ('bouen wt'; *ibid.* fol. B7r), that is, from the 'throne', calling on the mankind character to mend his ways. In *Fidelity*, God sits 'in his throne' ('in synen thron'; *ibid.* p. 183) between Justice and Grace, while World at some point stands 'alone in front of his court' ('alleen voer synn hoff'; *ibid.* p. 185). In *Wisdom's Invitation* one or two entrances on proscenium level are needed behind which two contrasting dinner parties are being staged, one given by World and one by Wisdom, either simultaneously or consecutively. In *Reckless Life*, a play from which only a few pages have survived, World invites the mankind character into her 'palace' ('paleijs'; *ibid.* l. 39).

40 *All the World's Pleasure Is Idle* p. 9: 'Onder shemels troone / Zoo zittick conighinne, zonder eenich lemmer zeer'.

41 *Ibid.* p. 21: 'Hier zal zitten Christus ghenaeemt tRechtverdich oordeel Gods up eenen Reghenbooghe als ten oordeele'.

temptations who are being introduced as 'Three maids of honor and servants of the World, lavish ladies, frivolously dressed, according to their nature'.⁴² Although most action in this play is verbal and spectacular elements such as banquet scenes and tableaux vivants are missing, dialogue and stage directions still suggest a theatrically impressive staging, based on the precisely described use of the three entrances in the stage screen and of the chairs placed in front of them. World makes a spectacular appearance:

The World, coming out of the Court of Darkness, Lust of the Flesh, Lust of the Eyes, and Pride of Life following behind her. Seating herself on the Throne of Satan, she says.⁴³

After which World and the members of her retinue expand on her power and influence, and on the 'Realm' ('Rijck'; fol. N1v) of 'our sovereign prince' ('ons souverainen Prins'), that is, Satan. She shows herself to be proud and confident: 'Each man reveres me, each serves me as a boy; / I overwhelm his heart entirely'.⁴⁴

Until now, we have purposely refrained from referring to the plays' dialogue, in order to focus on the visual aspect of personification. Of course, it is both by word and image that personifications constitute meaning and generate emotion. Part of the impression World's entrance makes on the audience depends on how she presents herself verbally. In *The Cornerstone*, her opening speech is a demonstration of her seductiveness and might:

I am a Queen everlasting,
Sweet, fair, neat, and very fine,
Pleasing, friendly through my flattery.
I will never be widowed,
Nor shamefully overthrown,
Since the worthy prince of darkness,
My husband, who always serves my exploits,
Through me brings death to many a Christian,

42 *Schiedam: Morality Play in Haarlem, 1606* fol. M1r: 'Drie staets-princessen, ende Dienaressen der Werelt, weeldige Ionckvrouwen, lichtvaerdich en costelick gecleet, naer haeren aert'.

43 *Ibid.* fol. N1v: 'De Wereldt, comende uyt 't Hof der duysternissen, achter haer hebbende Wellust des Vlesches, Begeerlijcheyt der Oogen ende Grootsheyt des Levens. Stelt haer op den Throon des Satans ende segt'.

44 *Ibid.* fol. N2r: 'Elck mensche werooct my, elc dijent my als een Knech; / Ick leg' hem gansch en al begraven in het herte'.

Since all those made of flesh, desire me.
 Thus, I shall focus on Many a Religious Member,
 In order to pull him away from Christ.
 He happens to be right here; combat awaits him.
 O son, thou art greeted.⁴⁵

After which she addresses Many a Religious Member, the mankind character, trying to subjugate him.

In *Simple Man and Illusion of Virtue*, by Louris Jansz, World's glory, might, and grandeur are likewise attached to his retinue, as in the play from Schiedam. Instead of the three temptations, Mammon, Envy, and Diverse Opinions now accompany him:

Here now appears the World, dressed very exquisitely, and Mammon, adorned very graciously, Envy with a heart in one hand, a sword in the other, and Diverse Opinions, [with] a bow and arrows.⁴⁶

The appearance of Envy is very standard. She—this character usually is female—might be represented in a way comparable to that in prints such as those of the Haarlem entries, in which she takes the form of an old woman eating her heart [Fig. 11.9].

In *Wisdom's Invitation*, World in a long expository monologue describes herself as 'the earthly boaster, who flatters and kisses everyone. / Why should man not obligingly serve me?'.⁴⁷ She, too, maintains a large retinue, two of whom—Vainglory and Vanity—are called 'maid' ('kamenier'; p. 251), and a third—Pride—'servant' ('knecht'). In addition, there are two *sinnekens*, Foolish Doctrine and Sovereign Thinking, and two more (female) characters:

45 *The Cornerstone* ll. 201–213: 'Ick ben een Coninginne eeuwich geduerich, / Soet schoon, idoon en seer bekuerich, / behaechlijck, vrindlijck door mijn fleuwicheijt fijn. / Ick en sal gheen weduwe inder eeuwicheijt sijn, / Noch niet omme sijn gesteecken blamelijck, / Want de prince der duijsterheijt eersamelijck, / Mijnen man, die hem altijt tot mijn ex-ploot dwingt, / Menich christen hij deur mijn ter doot bringt, / Want al dat vleesch is, is mijn begeerende. / Dus gaen ich Menich Gelovich Lidt bestrecken, / Op dat ick hem mach van Christo trecken. / Hij staet hier juijst; hem naeckt bestrijdinghe. / O zoone, weest gegroet'.

46 *Simple Man and Illusion of Virtue* fol. 103v: 'Hier comt nu Die Werlt uuijt seer heerlick gecleet, ende Mammon, heel cierlick toegemaect, Nijdicheijt met een hart in haer hant, in dander hant een swaert, ende Diversche Opijnijen, een hambooch [sic] met pijlen'.

47 *Wisdom's Invitation* p. 259: 'daerdsche pronkster [...], die ieder vleijt en' kust. / Waerom en sou den mensch dienst-vaerdich mij niet eeren?'



FIGURE 11.9 *Moderation (Maticheijt), Envy (Nidicheijt), and Greed (Giericheijt). Entry of the chamber of The Hague in Haarlem, 1606, detail. Engraving. In Const-thoonende ivweel, by de loflijcke stad Haerlem, ten versoecke van Trou moet blijcken, in 't licht gebracht (Zwolle: Zacharias Heyns: 1607). Groningen, University Library, uklu 'EPEPE 251 A.*

Error (*Dwaling*) and World's Deceit (*sWerelds Bedroch*). All feature in the first of two tableaux vivants this play includes:

The World sits in the Court of Error, having dinner with her retinue; the *sinnekens* [stand] at either side in order to serve [her]. At the back [of the parlor] is the music or the instruments. The Chorus [members] open and close the curtains three times, each of them speaking these lines.⁴⁸

48 Ibid. p. 272: 'De wereldt sit in't hof van dolen aen de maeltijdt, met haer gevolg, de sinnen aen weersijden staende om te dienen. Achter is het spel of d'instrumenten. De Chooren schuijven de gordijnen driemaal op end' toe, ende spreken elk een reijs dese regels'.

World does not so much make an impressive entrance here, but is spectacularly presented, without speaking herself, at least not in these moments of repeated disclosure. The instrumental and, as we will see, vocal music add to this splendid effect.⁴⁹

Wars of Words

Let us now expand the scope of our analysis to the dominant plot motifs or actional patterns that we come across in plays featuring World, and which frame both the meanings and the emotions he/she engenders. As mentioned above, two plays can be identified as competition entries. These usually employ the pattern of a mankind character wrestling with a preset question and with contradictory answers. The action may contain elements of pilgrimage and seduction, but primarily consists of deliberation and debate, more precisely of the presentation to the mankind character by mutually opposing persons of his options in view of his final end. World, of course, represents and advocates for negative behavior. The plays aim at exemplifying the mankind character's mental state and its development from obfuscation to illumination, not just verbal, but also visual, through an intricate play with allegorically named costumes, chairs, and props. Both the objects themselves and the actions performed with them establish meaningful relations between personifications, as well as making their interactions more easily apprehensible and memorable.

The first competition play, *Those Who Trust in Comfort*, was written for a contest held in Gouda in 1546. The question to be answered was: 'Who in this world's domain / Trust in future comfort most?'.⁵⁰ The mankind character here is called Heavy Conscience (*Beswaerde Consciencie*). He sits down in a chair, the name of which expresses his state of mind: Indecisiveness (*Wanckelbaricheijt*). His heavy conscience literally wears him down, making him fall asleep. Doubt and Despair approach and waken him. The latter adds to Heavy Conscience's confused state by handing him a hat representing 'many opinions and laws' ('veel opinien en wetten'; l. 124). Messenger of Grace (*Post der Genaden*), dressed like John the Baptist, comes on stage, calling on everyone present to prepare the way of the Lord. Comfort of Scripture (*Troost der Schrifturen*)

49 Apparently the space behind the screen was large enough to contain both the table and a small instrumental ensemble, like the one in the first-floor space of the Haarlem stage of 1606 [Fig. 11.8]. In all likelihood the scene in De Koning's play was situated behind the middle opening at proscenium level.

50 *Those Who Trust in Comfort* fol. 122r: 'Wie haer hier in swerrelts foreest / Op den toecommende troost verlaeten aldermeest?.'

enters next. He urges Heavy Conscience to throw away his hat and to trust in grace; his future comfort will be his salvation in Christ.

Comfort of Scripture ‘stands with one foot on a stone or a Bible on which is written “Christ”’.⁵¹ He hands the spiritual arms cited in *Ephesians* 6:16–17—‘this sword of the Spirit [...], the shield of faith [...], and the crown of salvation’⁵²—to Heavy Conscience, who has risen from his chair. He receives a new name: Knowledge of Himself (*Kennisse tot Hem Selven*; l. 442). Doubt and Despair, returning on stage, try to talk him out of his newfound faith, encouraging him to seek worldly comfort. John the Baptist and Comfort of Scripture confront the *sinnekens*. They assist Heavy Conscience to ward off World and to remain focused on his future comfort. They make their case with the help of a presentation of a tableaux vivant of ‘Christ rising from the grave’ (‘Christus verrijssende’; fol. 131r). Then World comes on stage, waging a renewed charm offensive:

My friend, I must join you here;
Your appearance has seized my heart from within.
The youth of my life shall completely dry up,
If you drive me out of your senses.
Kiss me, love, in order to find comfort.
Put away this shield, let us triumph.
Cast away this sword, then I shall love thee,
And together [we] may amorously unite.⁵³

But Heavy Conscience, helped by Comfort of Scripture, verbally keeps her at bay. World angrily leaves the stage, saying: ‘I shall tell this [to] my husband bluntly / That you are fed up with my world’.⁵⁴

The other competition play, *Schiedam: Morality Play in Haarlem, 1606*, deals with the topic of charity and poor relief. It was performed at a contest in

51 Ibid. fol. 126v: ‘met sijn voet staend op een steen of bijbel daer “Christ” op geschreven staet’.

52 Ibid. ll. 426–428: ‘dit sweert des geest [...], schilt des gelooffs [...] en de croon [...] der salicheijt’.

53 Ibid. ll. 909–916: ‘Mijn vrindt, ick moet mijn hier bij u vogen; / U wesen heeft mij bevangen mijn hart van binnen. / De Jeucht mijn levens sal geheel verdrogen, / Ist dat ghij mijn sedt uijjt uwen sinnen. / Cust mij eens, lieff, om troosts gewinnen. / Leght aff desen schilt, laet ons triumpheren. / Werpt wech dit swaert, so sal ick u beminnen, / En tsaemen in Amoreusheijt boeleren’.

54 Ibid. ll. 1039–1040: ‘Ick salt mijnen man gaen vertellen pladt / Hoe dat ghij mijn werlt sijt aldus sadt’.

Haarlem in 1606 and aimed at stimulating the purchase of lottery tickets, the proceeds of which were used to build a new old men's home in that city.⁵⁵ The play had to answer the question: 'what reward awaits him who lovingly comforts the poor / As well as what severe punishment him who despises rather than comforts them?'.⁵⁶ This time the mankind character is called Many a Christian Man (*Menich Christen Mensch*).⁵⁷ Powerless Old Age (*Krachteloze Ouderdom*) and Helpless Old Age (*Hulpelosen Ouderdom*) ask him for help.⁵⁸ Initially they touch a chord in him; Many a Christian Man promises to ask Owed Duty (*Schuldige Plicht*), the personification of the Christian commandment of charity, for advice. World orders the three temptations to prevent Many a Christian Man from consulting Owed Duty (and from helping the old men). She then rises from her throne and leaves the stage as triumphantly as she entered it, accompanied by instrumental music.⁵⁹ The three temptations announce that they will seduce Many a Christian Man to fill both his money chest and his belly selfishly, and to dress lavishly. They set him in a chair called Fleshly Ease (*Vleeslike Sorgeloosheyt*; fol. O2v), and sing him to sleep.⁶⁰

Eventually he is freed from their spell by Law of Liberty (*Wet der Vryheyt*), 'a woman in long white clothes' ('Een vrouwe in lange witte clederen'; fol. M1r), who sits down in a third chair, called the Throne of Justifying Mercy (*Troon der Rechtvaerdiger Barmherticheyt*; fol. P4r), and holds an olive branch. She is seconded by two dumb characters, Reward (*Beloninghe*) and Punishment (*Straffe*). The first carries a laurel wreath, called the Crown of Honesty (*Croon der Eerlickheyt*; fol. P4v), and a white tunic, called the Wedding Garment ('t *Bruylofs cleet*); the second is appareled with a whip. Law of Liberty approaches Many a Christian Man. She introduces herself as the new law, that of Christ, the law of liberty, which demands man to be charitable to his neighbor (*James* 2:8). He shall be judged according to his compliance with this law (*James* 2:12). Many a Christian Man may choose with whom to go: Reward or Punishment,

55 On this contest and its relation to poor relief, see Boele, *Leden van één lichaam*; and Ramakers, "De Const getoond".

56 *Schiedam: Morality Play in Haarlem, 1606* fol. M1v: 'Die d'armen liefdich troost, wat loon de sulck verwacht, / Als oock wat straffe fel, die troosteloos haer veracht?.'

57 In order to avoid any misunderstanding about his ability to help, he is described as 'a very well-off citizen' ('Een welvermogende burger'; *ibid.* fol. M1r).

58 They are, of course, presented as quite the opposite: 'two poor, crippled, and needy old men' ('Twee arme crepelen en ghebreckighe oude mannen'; *ibid.* fol. M1r).

59 *Ibid.* fol. N4v: 'Steps down from the throne and goes in while [music is] playing' ('Treet af vanden troon ende gaet binnen met gespeel').

60 They sing him to sleep with a song in praise of World, referring to themselves as her envoys 'Ease, Riches, and Honor' ('Gemack, Rijckdom en Eer'; *ibid.* fol. O3r).

the laurel wreath and tunic or the whip, in short, heaven or hell?⁶¹ He chooses Reward.

Real Battles

The complexity of plays involving World and of the memory images they engender, increases when the action becomes more extended, involving more personifications, more levels of theatrical reality, more levels of allegorical practice, and—literally—more levels upon which the dramatic action is staged and performed. In the next three sections we shall see World featured in actional formats more complicated and visually impressive than before; these include a number of highly spectacular tableaux vivants. They add a further dimension to World's role on stage and to the meanings and emotions he/she helps to create.

In *Those Who Trust in Comfort*, the mankind character, although armed, fights the World with words only. In *Schiedam: Morality Play in Haarlem, 1606*, World does not talk to him at all. In the following plays, however, violent encounters take place between the mankind character and World (and/or her party), making for some spectacular scenes. Moreover, eschatological overtones abound. In *Fidelity* the male World presents himself as a rich, materially oriented person, who is tempted by Cunning Stratagem and Treacherous Mind to acquire even more wealth by marrying Avarice (*Ghiricheyt*). Fidelity (*Trauwe*), 'a stately nobleman' ('een statich edelman'; p. 145), tries to talk him out of this liaison. At the urging of Avarice, World seeks advice from Treachery (*Valscheyt*), who convinces him to ban Fidelity from earth.⁶² The latter asks Comfort, Hope, and Pleasure to accompany him.⁶³ World and Avarice, who are

61 He is possibly offered a vision of the latter in the form of a tableau vivant of the rich man in hell (Luke 16:23). Law of Liberty says: 'Behold! With the rich man you will end miserably' ('Siet! Met den rijcken vreck ghy droevich dan gheraeck'; *ibid.* fol. Q1r), after which he cites Paul's frightening description of hell in 2 *Thessalonians* 1:8–9.

62 The *sinnekens* make a real proclamation from 'a large, sealed letter' ('eenen grooten, gesegelden brief'; *Fidelity* p. 154) announcing World's decision.

63 Comfort (*Troost*) and Hope (*Hoepe*), on hearing Fidelity's story, immediately decline. Hope refuses to join Fidelity, 'Since the World is angry with you, / And Avarice and Treachery are in accord, as they are with Money, / And these three are dragged through the World' ('Aengesien dat die werelt op u is gestoort, / En Ghirichyt en Valschyt nu syn accoort, / Gelyck metten Gelde, / En dees dry ter Werelt worden getrocken voort'; *ibid.* ll. 519–522). Pleasure (*Ghenuchte*) is the third person Fidelity approaches. She is 'a woman lightly dressed' ('een vrouwen licht gecleet'; *ibid.* p. 158). The *sinnekens* talk her into

about to enjoy the benefits of their union, are informed by Treachery, though, that Fidelity has not really left.⁶⁴

Fidelity, together with Comfort, Hope, and Pleasure appears on stage and prays to God for help. At the same time, God appears above, sitting on his throne, between Justice and Mercy. Justice holds a 'naked sword' ('bloeten swerde'; p. 184), Mercy a 'branch' ('rysken'). The scene recalls the one in the play from Schiedam. This time, however, a real battle is waged. Fidelity turns into a Christian warrior. He challenges World, who refuses to fight for himself, but instead, advised by Treachery, lets Violence (*Fortse*) take his place. Both contestants are clad in armor. Violence describes his as consisting of six parts, each denoting a deadly vice (the seventh sin, Avarice, is already personified). In the course of battle Fidelity kicks Violence 'over the brink of hell' ('over thelsche boort'; l. 1480), literally pushing him off the platform. Their fight is watched from God's throne by all the protagonists and from World's court by all the antagonists. After Force's defeat, World kneels before Fidelity and expresses his regret.⁶⁵ Justice passes his sword to Fidelity, while Mercy provides him with a helmet and shield. His armor is called 'justice' ('justitiën'; l. 1436), his helmet 'Christ's crown' ('Christus croone'; l. 1428), and his shield 'holy faith' ('theylich geloeve'; l. 1440).

A small print by Hieronymus Wierix shows the Christian Knight surrounded by blazons quoting the Latin descriptions of his armor in *Ephesians* 6 [Fig. 11.10].⁶⁶ He tramples on seven swords representing the seven deadly sins. Three other prints, described above, demonstrate that the iconography of the Christian Knight and World resembles their actions and appearance featured

refusing as well. However, she withdraws from that decision after preventing Impatience (*Onverduldicheyd*)—'an ugly woman with a naked sword in her hand' ('een leelyck wijff met eenen bloeten swerde in die hant'; *ibid.* p. 165) from killing Fidelity.

64 World summons all trade guilds and all estates to appear before him, to find out whether any of them has given refuge to Fidelity. None of them has, since no fidelity can be found in them—all are corrupted.

65 A judgment scene enfolds, involving Justice and Mercy. World now accepts Fidelity, Hope, and Pleasure, and promises to do penance for his sinful living. Besides the fact that he is male, he acts unconventional in that he mends his ways, instead of returning to hell. He more or less acts as if he is a mankind character, like at the beginning of the play, when the *sinnekens* tempt him into a liaison with Avarice. Apparently the anonymous playwright was not familiar with the more sophisticated portrayal of Lady World as she appears in other plays and in prints.

66 *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, The Wierix Family* LXVI, 131, 133 (no. 1793).



FIGURE 11.10 Hieronymus Wierix, The Christian Knight. Engraving, 9.1 cm × 5.9 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1904-138.

in the plays [Figs. 11.5–7]. In Wierix's *Four Enemies of Righteousness* [Fig. 11.7], it is Faith, not the Christian Knight, whom Heresy, Death, Devil, and World surround, but the fourth stanza of the inscription implicitly compares her to a knight, saying that she, too, is spiritually armored. In the image, the shield at her feet corresponds to this passage.⁶⁷ Two engravings include figures who represent false opinions: Heresy (below left) in the print by Wierix and the monkish character with glasses and a book (center right) in Serwouters's [Fig. 11.5].

In *The Cornerstone*, Man (*Den Mensch*) seems to be unarmed, and thus becomes an easy target for World, who finally stabs him with her sword. From the very start, he defines his life in terms of a struggle against World: 'O Lord, my Lord, let me not collapse, / Lest the World conquers me through her teachings.'⁶⁸ In order firmly to ground him, his two advisers, God's Holy Word (*tHeijlich Woort Gods*) and Spirit's Inspiration (*Geests Inspiratie*), set him on a stone, the cornerstone, that is, also called the 'promised stone' ('steen der beloften'; l. 802), a version of which we see in Serwouters's print [Fig. 11.5]. A new name is pinned on his costume: Many a Believing Member (*Menich Gelovich Lidt*; l. 186). In the verbal exchange with World, Man withstands her charms and remains focused on the promise of redemption through Christ. His advisors assist him by presenting a series of both singly and simultaneously presented tableaux vivants, containing examples of final reward for faith steadfastly maintained.

To help the audience understand the content and meaning of the tableaux, the characters within them describe and interpret what is revealed when the curtains are parted.⁶⁹ The actors standing on the proscenium—Man, God's Holy Word, Spirit's Inspiration, and World—engage in these hermeneutical activities as well. World, of course, disputes the images' significance and tries to win Man over to her side, gradually changing the tone and content of her words from flattery to threat.⁷⁰ The fourth (single) tableau, presented shortly

67 The inscription reads: 'Maer tghelooue hebbende Gods woordt inde handt, / Den schilt veur haer, de croone tot een uercieren, / (Vol van Gods gheest) wederstaet werelt, en vijandt, / Met de Doot, en alle valsche kettters manieren' ('But Faith, holding God's Word in her hand, / The shield before her, the crown as adornment, / (Full of God's spirit) withstands World and Satan, / As well as Death, and all false heretic manners').

68 *The Cornerstone* ll. 41–42: 'O Heere, Heer, en laet mij niet versincken / Dat mij die werrelt niet en verwint door haere scientie'.

69 In addition banderoles with citations from Scripture are either attached to the upper edge of the screen (above the entrances to the spaces in which the scenes are shown), to the curtains before these entrances, or to the characters' costumes or attributes.

70 The first living image is a double one. Below Sampson destroying the temple of Dagon (*Judges* 16:23–30); a banderole with *Psalm* 34:16. Above Christ hanging on the cross; a banderole with *Ephesians* 5:2. The second tableau is a single image above of the risen Christ

before the end of the play, is the most spectacular; it combines several motifs from *Revelation* (see below).

In *Simple Man and Illusion of Virtue*, World and his adherents attack the mankind character, Simple Man (*dEenvoudighe Mensche*), who withstands their onslaught. Prior to this battle, he is led astray by False Persuasion and Eye-struck Beauty. They lead him to a house called Exterior Behavior (*Uuijtwendich Gebaer*; l. 541), symbolizing outward religion. Here dwells Illusion of Virtue (*Schijn van Deuchden*), who is called 'a princess' ('een princes'; ll. 558, 590). As soon as 'the light of truth' ('licht des waerheijts'; l. 560) was extinguished, she says, she came forth to rule over all. She seats Simple Man in a chair called Confused Heart (*Bestrictheijt des Herten*; l. 652). From here he calls for help, which arrives in the form of God's Goodness (*Ghoodts Goetheijt*), a stately doctor, and Truth (*Die Waerheijt*), a woman honestly dressed. They help him get up from the chair and start to arm him spiritually.⁷¹ He, too, is then placed on a foundation stone.⁷² A character named God's Voice (*Die Stemme Goodts*) performs the traditional role of the watchman, cheering Simple Man on from on high: 'God's Voice from above the stage like a heavenly messenger' ('Die Stemme Goodts boven over taneel als een hemelse bode'; fol. 106v). World shoots three arrows at him, symbolizing the three temptations. In Serwouters's *The Christian Knight* we see a devil (or Satan) launch three such arrows [Fig. 11.5]. At some point all four opponents simultaneously attack Simple Man, who ultimately prevails.

with the banner of victory, containing 1 *Corinthians* 15:54, crushing Satan and death under his feet; an angel or the spirit of the prophets hovers over Christ; a banderole on Christ's mantle with 1 *Corinthians* 15:55; a banderole on the curtains with *Romans* 5:8. The third tableau, again, is a double one. Above the martyrs Stephen, Jacob, Peter, and Paul; World standing behind them with a naked sword. Above 'a character on a tabernacle called living truth' ('een parsonage in een tabbernaeckel genaemt levende waerheijt' (ibid. ll. 1148–1149); a banderole on the curtains with *Revelation* 3:21.

- 71 His armor consists of: 'the garment of justice' ('tcleet der gerechticheijt'; *Simple Man and Illusion of Virtue* l. 982); 'the Lord's harness' ('t harnas Goodts'; ibid. l. 987); 'the helmet of salvation' ('den helm der salicheijt'; ibid. l. 997); shoes called 'the preparation of the Gospel' ('een bereijding tot het evangelij'; ibid. l. 999); and 'faith [...] / Which is the shield of the soul' ('tgelooft [...] / Tis het schilt der sielen'; ibid. ll. 1008–1009). He is, furthermore, called upon to 'gird' ('Omgort'; ibid. l. 1013) himself 'with the truth' ('met die waerheijt') and to take 'the sword of the spirit, called God's word' ('tswaert des geests, Goodts woort genaemt'; ibid. l. 1015).
- 72 It is called: 'This rejected cornerstone from Sion' ('Die verworpen hoeck steen in Sijon'; ibid. l. 2030; *Isaiah* 28:16; *Psalms* 118:22; *Matthew* 21:42–44), 'the true foundation of the Christian church' ('trechte fundament vanden crijsten kercke'; ibid. l. 1043).

Above we referred to Rijssaert van Spiere's preference for clamor and tumult. In *The Christian Knight*, World and World's Lover assume the role of the primary evil antagonists; they put on armor and march out to fight their adversaries, that is, the two representatives of mankind: Human Race, subdivided into The Many (*Groot Ghetal*) and The Few (*Weynigh*).⁷³ Clad as knights they battle against World and World's Lover. The Many, who first met World at the start of the play, when he was invited to admire her beauty, now fights for his future, along with The Few. Soon after, God's Will (*Gods Wille*), a herald with a trumpet, announces in word and music the forthcoming confrontation. The preparatory process, alluding to *Ephesians* 6:13–17, is a spectacle in itself:

Out of God's Throne [Heaven] come the Herald [God's Will], God's Spirit, Faith (with a red cross in her hand), Hope (holding an anchor), and Charity (holding a small child). The Herald carries spiritual armor, that is, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, Truth, Justice, and Peace, feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel.⁷⁴

God's Will calls upon The Many and The Few to put on their spiritual armor, provided by God's Spirit, Faith, Hope, and Charity. (The theological virtues carry the standard attributes.) Both are first summoned: 'Gird your loins, sharpen your conscience' ('Gordt u leden, wit u conscientie'; fol. B8r). Then they participate in an elaborate investiture ceremony.⁷⁵ Finally, God's Will presents both combatants with a Bible: 'Behold the Bible, the right touchstone, / In which you will find (therefore be patient), / What you owe to God and man'.⁷⁶

World holds a shield inscribed 'Disbelief' ('Ongheleovigheyt'; fol. D1v); World's Lover's shield shows how 'Abel was killed' ('werdt Abel ghedoodt'). Like the proverbial wolf in sheep's clothing, he looks like 'a wolf at the back, like a human at the front' ('achter als een wolf, ende voren als een man';

73 Their full names are The Many or The Larger Crowd ('t *Groot Getal of de Meeste Menichte*) and Hardly Anyone or Few People (*Letter Yemant of Weynigh Menschen*).

74 *The Christian Knight* fol. B7r: 'Hier comen uyt Godes Troon den Heraut, 'tGeest Godts, het Gheloove, hebbende inde hant een root cruyce. De Hope, hebbende eenen ancker. De Liefde, hebbende een cleyn kindeken. Den Heraut brenght met, 't gheestelijck wapen, als te weten, den schilt des gheloofs, den helm der saligheyt, het sweert des gheest, de waerheyt, gherechtigheyt en vrede, voeten geschoeyt met veerdicheyt des Evangeliums'.

75 It even seems that the three theological virtues are literally connected to The Many and The Few. In any case, Hope is said to be affixed ('aenghehecht'; *ibid.* fol. C4r) to them.

76 *Ibid.* fol. C7v: 'Siet daer is de Bijbel, den rechten Toetsteen, / Daer sult ghy in vinden, dus weest gheduldigh, / Wat ghy Godt ende mensche zijt schuldigh'.

fol. D1v).⁷⁷ (Compare the left *sinneken* in the print by Swanenburch [Fig. 1], who looks like a wolf above and like a man below.) Flesh and Blood (*Vleysch en Bloet*), who is later renamed Own Flesh (*Eyghen Vleysch*), steps forward to join them, just as The Few, who is now renamed Knight (*Ridder*), joins The Many.

Knight and The Many brace themselves for the coming battle by kneeling and singing *Psalm* 3:1–2. The stage is literally set for the confrontation, since, according to a stage direction, both God and Satan, take seats to watch it:

The Devil sitting in a chair with a banderole, on which is written *Curse*. / Out of God's Throne comes Strength of Spirit with a banderole, on which is written *The Law is given by Moses*. / Faith with a banderole, *God's gift is eternal life*. / Hope with a banderole, *God is merciful*. / Love with a banderole, *God so loved etc.* [*John* 3:16]. / Death with a banderole, *The wages of sin etc.* [*Romans* 6:23]. / Sin with a banderole, *All is under [the power] of sin etc.* [*Romans* 3:9]. / Flesh and Blood with a banderole, *Flesh and blood cannot etc.* [*1 Corinthians* 15:50]. / False Doctrine with a banderole, *We sell etc.* [*the refuse of the wheat*] [*Amos* 8:6]. De *sinnekens* as before.⁷⁸

Against this backdrop, the Knight and The Many continue singing *Psalm* 3:3–4. The Devil, speaking in periphrasis, brags about his power and influence, still trying to win over the Knight and The Many; members of his retinue, including World, offer verbal support. The protagonists, supported by God's Will, contradict their empty words. Again, what starts as a verbal quarrel gradually turns into a physical fight. The Devil orders his servants to attack. The Many is not up to the challenge, since Sin, Death, and False Doctrine, the latter dressed like 'a monk' ('een Moninck'; fol. A4r), have joined the fray. (Compare the monkish

77 They engage in a long exchange of mutual accusations of the harm they do and of the sins they cause people to commit. The examples they refer to come from the Bible, those from the present concern the wrongdoing of the Catholic Church and its clergy. They call The Many and The Few 'heretics' ('kettters'; *ibid.* fols. D5r, D6r), thus changing the universal and eternal battle between heaven and hell, right and wrong, into a particular and contemporary one between true and false religion.

78 *Ibid.* fol. D8r: 'De Duyvel buyten sittende in eenen zetel met een rolle, daer in gheschreven, *Vervloekinghe*. / Wt Godes Troon comt 't Geest Sterckheyt met een rolle, daer in gheschreven, *De Wet is door Mosi ghegheven*. / Tgheloove met een rolle, *De gave Godts is het eeuwich leven*. / De Hope met een rolle, *Godt is barmhertigh*. / De Liefde met een rolle, *Soo lief heeft Godt etc.* / De Doot met een rolle, *De loon der Sonden is etc.* / De Sonde met een rolle, *Tis al onder die sonde etc.* / Vleysche en Bloedt met een rolle, *Vleysche en Bloedt etc.* / Valsche Leere met een rolle, *Wy vercoopen etc.* / De Sinnekens als voren'.

character in Serwouters's print [Fig. 11.5].) The Many flees into the Valley of Sorrow.

Now it becomes clear why The Few is called Knight: only a minority of men is really able to fight powers such as these. He eliminates or neutralizes nearly all these forces, every encounter being preceded and followed by a verbal exchange. First, he literally steps on Flesh and Blood. His threats drive False Doctrine away; she decides to go and teach her heresies to The Many. Next he tramples Sin. The latter action compares very well to Serwouters's and Wierix's *The Christian Knight* [Figs. 11.5–6], in which a vice—possibly Wrath (with a serpent) and Avarice or Lust (with a toad), lie defeated at or under the Christian Knight's feet. In the play, the remaining adversaries, cheered on by the Devil, launch a final attack. The Knight sings a stanza based on *Psalms* 130:1–2. Then, after Death stabs him, he recites his final lines, a paraphrase of Christ's last words on the cross (*Luke* 23:34). Flesh and Blood and Sin stand up and together with their companions rejoice in their victory.

Eschatological Perspectives

However, *The Christian Knight* does not end here. A stage direction indicates that out of God's Throne come God's Spirit, Faith, Hope, and Charity, who lift up the Knight, kneel before him, and respectively hand him 'a crown, a palm, and a white tunic' ('een croone, een palmtack, ende een wit cleedt'; fol. Fiv). He has become a martyr for the faith.⁷⁹ (Compare in this respect the crown—or wreath—held above the protagonist's head by angels in both Serwouters's *The Christian Knight* and Wierix's *Four Enemies of Righteousness* [Figs. 11.5 & 11.7].)⁸⁰

79 This image of the Christian Knight surrounded by God's Spirit and the theological virtues is sustained, while from God's Throne *Psalms* 103:1–6 is sung, divided into three stanzas, alternated with instrumental music. Next the Devil is shown in the Throne of Hell, tied to a chair. His entourage witnesses his fate in horror. It will be theirs, too, like that of The Many, who enters World's Bower. Like the majority of men he represents, he has fallen for the charms of a worldly life.

80 The motif of the crown is an intriguing one. In three plays, the mankind character receives one as a sign of his future glory in heaven. Besides in *Those Who Trust in Comfort*, it appears in *Schiedam: Morality Play in Haarlem, 1606*—the laurel wreath, called Crown of Honesty—and in *The Christian Knight*. In two plays the 'helmet of salvation' from *Ephesians* 6:17 is also called a crown. The 'crown of salvation' in *Those Who Trust in Comfort* is paralleled by 'Christ's crown' in *Fidelity*. Thus, the headwear's name already refers to the reward which awaits him who courageously faces the world, whatever the outcome.

The last of the tableaux vivants presented to Man in *The Cornerstone* likewise provided the audience with an eschatological perspective, this time combining elements from *Revelation* 5 & 19: the book with the seven seals (*Revelation* 5:1, 6–9) and the wedding supper of the lamb (*Revelation* 19:7–9):

Here one shall present in the throne above, God the Father sitting in a chair, and a small table standing before him, with the book on it and the lamb representing Christ, four elders around the chair, and many children, that is, the victorious, with palms in their hands, and God shall dry the tears in their eyes, and he shall drape them with white satin, and the elders shall give them incense, and an angel from beside the throne shall speak these words.⁸¹

The angel then describes the image's content. St. John, on whose vision it is based, is represented, too, 'lying before the throne as if dreaming' ('leggende aenden thron oft hij droomde'; fol. 117r).⁸² As mentioned above, World finally strikes her deadly blow. Man dies, but not until he—and through him the audience—have been given assurances of their future heavenly glory.

Apocalypse 12, *Verse* 1 is completely devoted to the end times. World comes on stage together with Sin (*Sonde*), assisted by Heresy and Tyranny, the two *sinneken*. They do not try to seduce the mankind character, nor do they get involved in a fight with him. They merely wage a war of words, that is, they enter into a discussion on the meaning of *Revelation* 12:1–5: John's vision of the sun-clothed woman in childbirth and the red dragon, which is presented in a tableau vivant. In this exegetical endeavor, World and her party represent the voice of rejected Catholic tradition.⁸³ The play passes through seven

81 *The Cornerstone* fol. 117r: 'Hier salmen thonen boven inden troon den vader sittende in een stoel, ende een tafelken voor hem staende, daer op leggende een boeck en het lam het welcke Christus representeert, vier Ouders ontrent den stoel, ende veel kinderkens, te weten de verwinners, staende ontrent den stoel met palmen inde hant, ende Godt sal drogen de tranen van haer oogen, ende hij salse cleden met witten zijde, ende de Ouders sullen wierooch geven, ende een engel inden troon sal dese woorden sprecken'.

82 Besides John, the angel, two of the elders, one of the children and God's True Voice (*Waerachtige Stemme Gods*) further define and explain the scene. The latter sings a four-stanza song calling on Man to bear his suffering. On the curtains hangs a banderole with the text of 1 *Corinthians* 2:9.

83 This play is like a dramatized commentary on the Bible book, with a 'Prologue' ('Voorreden'; *Apocalypse* 12, *Verse* 1 fol. G3v) to and a 'Summary' ('Somma'; *ibid.* fol. G4v) of its content, and with two characters, Conclusion (*Conclusia*) and Oration (*Oratie*), speaking the epilogue.

exclusively verbal scenes, covering more than half of the text, before its climax—John's vision—is finally revealed.

There are two mankind characters in this play: Natural Man (*Natuerlijke Mensche*), a man, and Fleshly Disposition (*Vleeschelijck Ghesint*), a woman. They form a couple, more or less reflecting man's rational (the man) and physical side (the woman). The former praises natural reason as 'a Book or Chronicle / Whereby each may measure his life'.⁸⁴ The latter, on the other hand, states that reason must be feared; the opposition between body and mind is thus represented.⁸⁵ In order fully to understand both the book's literal and spiritual meaning, the mankind characters will eventually receive help from two men, Spiritual Education (*Gheestelijc Onderwijs*) and Scriptural Understanding (*Schriftuerlijck Verstant*). They enter the stage via Jerusalem and expand on the content of *Revelation* 1. Then John himself appears, first to summarize the content of *Revelation* 1 to 11, later to describe his vision. Finally, the curtains are opened and God's Throne unveiled:

The woman in childbirth, dressed according to the text of *Apocalypse* 12, appears on God's Throne, and she cries out, in the pain and agony of giving birth, and she brings forth a male son, who shall rule all Heathens with an iron rod; and her child was snatched up to God and his throne. The woman flies into the Desert, that is, into Patmos. And the great red Dragon with seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns on his heads, stands before the woman in childbirth, to devour the fruit [of her womb] after she has given birth. This vision or presentation should take place in God's Throne.⁸⁶

84 Ibid. fol. G3r: 'een Boeck of Cronijcken / Waer by dat elck mach sijn leven verghelijcken'.

85 In this and the following scenes in which he appears, Natural Man reflects on the relation between rhetoric—in its contemporary manifestation of dramatic poetry—and reason, as well as on the function of both as regards the interpretation of Scripture, especially of those sections and passages that are allegorical and contain personifications, like *Revelation*. Natural Man defines the art of rhetoric as an instrument of knowledge acquisition, as a means to 'strengthen [...] natural reason' ('stercken [...] tot natuerlijke reden'; ibid. fol. G3v). Rhetoric is praised, 'Since by this means many have arrived / At knowledge of the truth damned for the World' ('Want door desen middel isser menigh gheraecht / Tot kennisse der waerheyt ter Werelt verdomt'; ibid. fol. H1r).

86 Ibid. fol. I1v: 'De barende Vrouwe toegemaect na uytwijsen des text Apocalipsis 12 vertoont haer in Godes Troon, en de sy roept, hebbende smerte ende quellenghe om te baren, ende sy baert eenen mannelijcken Sone, die alle Heydenen soude regeren met der ijseren roede, ende haer kint wert wech ghenomen tot Godt ende sijnen Throon. De vrouwe vlucht inde Woestijne, dat is, int Pathmos. Ende de groote roode Dreack met

World and Sin and the two mankind characters now comment on the tableau, which may either still be visible or already covered. Shortly after, they are joined by Spiritual Education and Scriptural Understanding, who enter into a lengthy explanation of John's vision; Natural Man and Fleshly Disposition interpolate a few comments, asking for clarification, whereas World and Sin dispute their exegesis, the former referring to her power over man and her promotion of sinful living: 'Since to pride my children are driven, / Ready to inherit the lustful life'.⁸⁷ Stage directions indicate that each of the elements of the vision appears on stage again: first Satan and the dragon, then the woman in childbirth. Later on, also Christ enters, joining the woman in her flight to Patmos. The appearance of Satan and Christ, who are present neither in the vision itself nor in the tableau vivant, serves to underscore the spiritual reading put forward by Spiritual Education and Scriptural Understanding.

Meanwhile the stage is set for the next tableau vivant: '*Revelation* 12:7. Here another sign is shown in Heaven: / Michael fights against the dragon'.⁸⁸ The two mankind characters, together with World and Sin, 'Look at this vision in astonishment' ('Sien met verwonderinghe dit visioen'; fol. K1v). Natural Man and Fleshly Disposition again begin puzzle over its meaning, this time helped by John himself, who after a couple of lines leaves it to Spiritual Education and Scriptural Understanding to provide further clarification. This exchange develops along the same lines as the one on *Revelation* 12:1–5, although the exegesis gradually evolves into a verbal attack on World and into a prophesy of her inevitable fate: she will be defeated like the dragon and Satan, whose bad infamy she shares.

The same vision is dramatized in *Man's Mind Seduced by the Flesh*. At the start of the play, World, Flesh, and Devil decide to tempt the mankind character, Man's Mind (*sMenschen Geest*), into a worldly existence; this play makes use of the word 'worldly' ('werelts') very frequently. Man's Mind is initially presented as an epitome of sinless virtue, 'dressed in white like an angel without wings, with a book in his hand'.⁸⁹ His sinful behavior becomes

seven hoofden ende thien hoornen, ende op sijne hoofden seven croonen, staet voor die barende vrouwe, om die vrucht te verslinden als sy soude ghebaert hebben. Dit visioen ofte vertooninge moet in Godes Throon geschieden'.

87 Ibid. fol. Izv: 'Want tot hoocheyt zijn mijn kinders ghedreven / Om 't lustigh leven, te beerven ghereet'.

88 Ibid. fol. K1v: 'Apoc. 12. vers 7. Hier wordt inden Hemel een ander teecken veroot: / Michael strijdt teghen den draeck'.

89 *Man's Mind Seduced by the Flesh* p. 608: 'int wit ghecleet als een engel sonder vloeghels, met een bûeck in die hand'. The temptation into sin is a matter of spiritual infection, whereby the vice of lust, through the work of the lightly dressed Flesh, does the trick.

apparent after he returns from his offstage get-together with Flesh: in the interim he has stained his white tunic. Two male advisors, Love of God (*De Liefde Gods*) and Fear of Punishment (*Vreese van Plaeghen*), call upon him to cleanse his sordid mind (exemplified, of course, by the stains on his tunic) with reason. Then the tableau vivant reveals the woman on the dragon—the whore of Babylon—from *Revelation* 17:3–6:

Here one shall present the dragon of the Apocalypse with the seven heads, and on it a woman sitting, exteriorly elegant, with a golden cup inscribed *Babylon magna* in her right hand, held up to her brow.⁹⁰ This dragon must be made movable in order to rotate. There should also be two mute characters in this presentation, standing by, surprised, looking up to the dragon, and then kneeling. One shall also write above the curtains: *veni es ostendam tibi damnationem meretricis magnae Apocalip. 17.*⁹¹ And during this presentation one shall play music from within [the tableau vivant] or sing with the voice and then speak, as follows.⁹²

On the proscenium below, Love of God and Fear of Punishment explain the significance of this image to Man's Mind. They compare the world to the fallaciousness of the seven heads and associate the latter with the seven deadly sins. (They do not mention the golden cup, but it might well have reminded the audience of representations of the World, who holds one, too [Figs. 11.5–6]). They then take Man's Mind offstage in order to clean his tunic. After returning,

According to Man's Mind, she is 'deafening and blinding inside / My reasoning mind and my five senses' ('Verdoovende, verblindende binnen / Mijn redelijck verstant en mijn vijf sinnen' (ibid. ll. 285–286), making him give in to her seduction, for which they leave the stage.

90 *Revelation* 17:5: 'Babylon the great'.

91 *Revelation* 17:1: 'Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters'.

92 *Man's Mind Seduced by the Flesh* p. 631: 'Hier salmen thoonen die draecke van Apocalipsis met seven hoofden, ende daer up sittende een uytwendighe chierlycke vrouwe met eenen gulden cop in hör rechte hand verheeven vör hör voirhoofd, ghescreeven *Babilon magna*. Desen draeck müet rüerende ghemaect syn om te drayene rontsomme. Item daer müeten twee stommem personages in deesen tooch syn, staende verwondert, seer siende ûp den draecke en knielende. Item boven die gordynen salmen schryven *veni es ostendam tibi damnationem meretricis magnae Apocalip. 17*. En deesen tooch gheduerende salmen binnen speelen musycke ofte vocaelijck singen ende dan voorts pronuncieeren'.

they completely purify him of his sins⁹³ and exhort him to defend himself against the world, taking Christ as his example. Christ appears to him in the next tableau vivant, wherein the world is again represented, this time not as a personification, but in the form of a large *pomeroy* or *globus cruciger*. The stage direction describing the scene reads as follows:

Here one shall present a risen Christ and lay at his feet an artificial globe, from out of which the Devil and the Flesh shall peer. And Christ shall pull out of this globe a naked living soul. Moreover this presentation shall be decorated on the inside like heaven. On the curtains one shall write: *Confidite, ego vici mundum*.⁹⁴

On the proscenium below the three fall on their knees, each reciting the stanza of a prayer. The globe from which the figures emerge reminds us of Boschian images of figures walking in or crawling out of animal bodies, shells, and casings. Well-known is the little globelike man in Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *Misanthrope*, after which Johannes Wierix made an engraving [Fig. 11.11].⁹⁵

At the end of *Those Who Trust in Comfort*, Heavy Conscience is described as wearing the crown of salvation; he has, says Comfort of Scripture, become 'a cross [...] to the world' ('de werrelt [...] een cruijs'; l. 1062). As a 'pure bride' ('suijverheijts bruijt'; l. 1063), he may stand up 'against the flesh and the world' ('tegens vlejssch end de werrelt'; l. 1064), an allusion to the bride from *Revelation* 19:7–8 and to the triad of the world, the devil, and the flesh of *Ephesians* 2:1–3. He is now called by yet another name: Pure of Heart (*Suijver van Harten*; l. 1068). John the Baptist now reveals the final tableau vivant:

Here one shall present the Father on his throne, with a crown in his hands; beside him, two or three children dressed in white, with palm breaches in their hands, crying: *Holy, Holy, Holy*, or singing the following

93 By having him drink a 'purgative' ('purgatyf'; *ibid.* l. 740), called 'disgust of sin' ('walghinge van sonden' l. 742), and eat a 'confection' ('confectie'; *ibid.* l. 791), called 'quick recovery' ('snelle beteringe'; *ibid.* l. 795).

94 *Ibid.* p. 648: 'Hier salmen thoonen eenen verreesen Christus, en vör syn vûeten sal liggen eenen ghemaecte werlt daer de duvel en tvleesch uyt sien sullen. Ende deese Christus sal uyt deese werlt nae hem trecken een naecte siele levende. Item deese tooch sal binnen verchiert sijn hemels ghewijs. Aen die Gordynen salmen schryven *Confidite, ego vici mundum*'. *John* 16:33: 'But take heart; I have overcome the world'.

95 *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, The Wierix Family* LXVI, 219 (no. 1863).



FIGURE 11.11 *Johannes Wierix after Pieter Brueghel the Elder, The Misanthrope Robbed by the World, (1566–1570). Engraving, d. 178 mm, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1939-397.*

(or something comparable), / To the tune of *Surrexit Christus Hodie* for two or three voices.⁹⁶

In all likelihood the tableau vivant again showed the risen Christ, but now with God and three boys impersonating angels, who either declaimed the opening words of the *Sanctus* or sang the prescribed Easter hymn. Both Father and Son speak from the throne to the mankind character below.

Banquets Earthly and Heavenly

Banquet scenes are part and parcel of *zinnespelen*. They always follow the same pattern. The mankind character is lured into eating, drinking, and engaging in sexual activity (or at least in the preliminaries to it), all of this accompanied by the singing of popular love songs, sometimes accompanied by instruments. We have already discussed the banquet scene in the *Mirror of the Course of This World*, but we encounter such scenes in four more plays. Dinner parties function as metaphors of a particular vice or of sinful living in general. World functions as their host. Quite the opposite is the case in dramatizations of banquets that figuratively signify union with God or Christ in heaven, such as the sacrifice of the lamb as described in *Revelation* 5:1–7, or the supper in the parable of The Master of the House (*Luke* 14:16–24). These banquets are virtuous, not sinful, and World tries to prevent the invited guests from joining them. All four plays employ features that facilitate *allegoresis*: plays within the play, a chorus, and two commentators, respectively.

In *All the World's Pleasure Is Idle*, the stage is dominated by World sitting at a richly laid table, together with personifications of the three temptations. The scene must have been staged behind the middle opening in the screen, so that it could be presented all at once, when the curtains parted. Thus, it initially functions like a tableau revealed to the characters on the proscenium. Standing there are the mankind character Wisdom Seeker (*sWijsheijts Bezouckere*) and his adviser Knowledge of Wisdom (*Kennesse der Wijsheijt*). The latter presents the living image to the former, as an exemplification of the

96 *Those Who Trust in Comfort* fol. 133r: 'Hier sallmen thonen den vader in sijn throon, met een Croon inde handen; beneffens hem twee ofte drie kinderkens int widt gecleet, met palmtacken inde handt, roepende: *Heijlich, Heijlich, Heijlich*, oft singende als volcht (oft diergelijcke), / Naer den voijs *Surrexit Christus Hodie* ende met twee oft drie partijen'; *Surrexit Christus Hodie*: Jesus Christ is Risen Today (*Matthew* 28:6: 'he has risen').

play's theme, namely, that 'The world is Satan's domain / In which he dwells'.⁹⁷ 'Therefore all works not originating from faith / Are idle before God',⁹⁸ a reference to *Ecclesiastes* 1:2, which is repeated at the end of the play.

Unlike a normal tableau vivant, in which the action is stilled, muted, and seen for a short time, until the curtains are drawn, this one evolves into a dramatic scene involving both speech and movement. First, World extensively describes herself and then discusses her intentions with another character, Spirit of Truth (*Den Gheest der Waerheijt*), who is dressed like 'an angel with a trumpet' ('als een Inghel met eenen trompet'; p. o). What we have here is a play within a play, since Wisdom Seeker invites Knowledge of Wisdom to explain to him the meaning of the tableau vivant before them. Scriptural Underpinning (*Schriftuerlick Funderen*) enters to offer clarification.⁹⁹ Finally, the curtains before God's Throne open once more to reveal Christ sitting on a rainbow. Spirit of Truth sounds the trumpet, announcing the Last Judgment. World bemoans her lot, after which the Devil drags her down into hell.

In *The Master of the House*, the audience is confronted with a real play within a play, a dramatization of the aforementioned parable from *Luke* 14:16–24. It is presented to a mankind character, Many a Layman (*Menich Leeck Mensche*), by Scriptural Comfort (*Schriftuerlicken Troost*) and Mind's Inspiration (*sGeests Inspiratie*). Many a Layman complains about his many faults, constantly referring to the world and the flesh, the personifications of which appear as *sinnekens* in the opening scene. The dialogue gradually moves towards the presentation of the parable, which is supposed to answer Many a Layman's pressing question: 'whether according to Scripture, without wrongdoing, we / May organize joyful feasts and grand dinners'.¹⁰⁰

The parable is dramatized on the proscenium; Many a Layman and company watch it from the wings. It amplifies and at the same time allegorizes the biblical text by providing all its *personae* (none of whom are specified there) with allegorical names.¹⁰¹ The *sinnekens* World and Flesh prompt them to turn

97 *All the World's Pleasure Is Idle* p. 2: 'De werelt es Sathans rijcke / Daer hij in es wonende'.

98 *Ibid.* p. 3: 'Dies alle wercken buuten tgheloove ghesprooten / Die zijn voor God ijdele'.

99 This play, too, may have been written on occasion of a theatrical festival, the receipts of which were destined for poor relief. This becomes clear when in the course of it three poor pass by the table, praying for alms. World literally covers her ears in order not to hear their pleas, the three temptations encouraging her to maintain her negative attitude.

100 *The Master of the House* p. 14: 'ofmen zonder mesdoen naer des scrijfts belijden / Wel mach stichten blijde feesten of groote maeltijden'. Again, a preset theme seems to lie at the basis of this play.

101 Thus, 'a certain man' (*Luke* 14:16), who hosts the supper, is called the Master of the House (*Den Vadere des Huusghezins*), his 'servant' (*Luke* 14:17) is named the Word of the Lord

down the invitation to the banquet. The servant informs the Master, and he responds by calling them 'those who have made an alliance with the world and the flesh'.¹⁰² Next he invites 'the poor and crippled and blind and lame' (*Luke 14:21*). A stage direction says: 'Here enter several poor people mutually lamenting'.¹⁰³ They sing a song referring to their poverty and misery. Word of the Lord calls his Master the heavenly father: 'It is a merciful master of the house, / A prince of princes, yes a lord of lords, / A king of kings, worth all honor'.¹⁰⁴ Meanwhile he opens the curtains covering the entrance at proscenium level. Once again, a richly laid table is seen. The new invitees fall on their knees and call upon each other to praise God. The Master then enters and interprets the banquet as the wedding supper of the Lamb:

He shall eat of the fruit of everlasting life
 In the wedding of the lamb, I say to you and repeat it here.
 Blessed is he who waits under the shining altar.
 His clothes shall be whitened without stain in its blood [of the lamb],
 And in the new Jerusalem [he shall] sit among his equals.¹⁰⁵

The Master orders his servants to invite even more guests at random; they enter as the personifications Benign Intention (*Goetwillich Voorstel*), Human Intellect (*Menschelick Verstant*), and Inner Feeling (*Inwendich Ghevoelen*); the author appears to make a conscious effort here to represent man in general as willing, thinking, and feeling. The curtains are opened for their benefit, too. Finally, the Master joins all invitees at the table.¹⁰⁶

(*tWoort des Heeren*) and 'those who had been invited' (*Luke 14:17*), that is, the three invitees, are identified as Earthly Mind (*Ertschelick Zin*), Avaricious Heart (*Ghierich Herte*), and Fleshly Appetite (*sVleesch Appetijt*). Each of them is described as 'a worldly man' ('een man werelick'; *ibid.* p. o).

102 *The Master of the House* p. 33: 'Die metter werelt en tvleeschs maeckten alianche'.

103 *Ibid.* p. 34: 'Hier zullen uittcommen Diversche aerme menschen jeghens elck andere lamenterende'.

104 *Ibid.* p. 39: 'Het is eenen vader des huusghezins baerhmertich [sic], / Een prince der princen, ja een heere der heeren, / Een coninck der coninghen, werdt alder eeren'.

105 *Ibid.* p. 43: 'Hij zal van de vruchten des levens onghemeteten eten / In de brulof des lams, zeg ik u eenpaer daer. / Zalich es hij die wacht onder den outaer claer. / Zijn cleederen int bloet zullen zonder smitten witten, / En int nieu Jherusalem omme zijn ghevitten [read: 'ghemitten'; from 'gemit'] zitten'.

106 Many a Layman, Scriptural Comfort, and Mind's Inspiration evaluate the parable. The latter, in accordance with his name, illuminates the meaning of the biblical story presented

In *Wisdom's Invitation*, the play's namesake, Wisdom (*Wijsheidt*), sends out her servants Fear of God (*Vreze Gods*) and Love of thy Neighbor (*Liefdes des Naasten*) to invite the mankind character to dinner. She is seconded by Prudence (*Voorsichticheid*) and Perfection (*Volmaektheid*). Mankind in this play is represented in aggregate by two or three 'virgins' ('maechden'; p. 251), collectively called The Purest Flock or Smallest Crowd (*De Reijnste Schare of Minste Menichte*).¹⁰⁷

Wisdom's supper is the mirror image of that of World, who, as we have seen, maintains a large retinue. All feature in the first tableau vivant, as described above. The Chorus members open and close the curtains three times, and then each speaks a couple of lines; the first one calls on man to 'Behold [...] the world, blinded by idleness, / In which there grows neither fear of God nor true wisdom'.¹⁰⁸ Then a seven-stanza song is sung, probably by the dinner party, with instrumental accompaniment, its text praising World and the good life she offers to all. In the next scene the characters at table start to speak, World challenging anyone who tries to resist her:

by his fellow-advisor. First he interprets the parable on a literal level: the invitation to the supper is meant 'As an example that we may also demonstrate / Charity and love to each in peril' ('Tot een exempel up dat wij oock zouden betooghen / Charitate ende liefde an elcken benauwen'; *ibid.* p. 54). Then he provides a spiritual meaning by comparing the poor and needy to the heathens who accepted the Gospel—a reference to the contemporary audience, who are supposed to link the earthly supper of the parable to the heavenly banquet with God, that is, the eternal life in the hereafter.

107 Abraham de Koning adapted his *zinnespel* to classical tragedy by dividing it in acts and scenes, by interspersing choruses, and by writing alexandrines. It, too, seems to have been written in answer to a question, phrased by a character called Doubt (*Twijfel*), namely whether God incites man to evil. He more or less answers it himself by characterizing man as being led by 'Sovereign Thinking, by erring and deceit, and world's Foolish Doctrine, / Through which one sees the fatherland turn into dispute and hate / About the worn-out creed tarnished by heresy. [...] I doubt, I seek faith, that I may arrive at wisdom, / to find rest from all this endless erring / And continue on my way to its [wisdom's] golden hall' ('eijgen-wijs vernuft / Bij dwaling en' bedroch en' 's wereldts dwase leere, / Waer door men 't vaderlandt in twist en' haet siet keeren / Om d'uijt-geputte leer van ketterij verduft. [...] Ik twijfel, soeck 't geloof; op dat ik wijsheidt naek, / In't soeken vande rust, voor al dit dwaelich dwalen / En' voordor mijnen wech na hare gulde sale'; *Wisdom's Invitation* p. 254).

108 *Ibid.* p. 272: 'Siet [...] de wereldt aen, in ijdelheid verblindt', / Waer up geen vreese Godts, noch ware wijsheidt wint'.

Who is he that envies my power and glory?
 Who is so dumb and willfully brainless,
 That he withstands me, and dares to waste his arrows
 On me, Lady World, who has existed for all time?¹⁰⁹

Wisdom now enters, referring to herself as Gods Word, a Bible in her hand, and reprimanding World and her adherents. For the first time we hear The Purest Flock or Smallest Crowd. They apparently sit at World's supper, but are convinced by Wisdom to join her instead:

The presentation where Wisdom holds her banquet with The Smallest Crowd, whilst there is singing to the tune of 'Fair love, thou alone art worthy of praise'. The Chorus members open [the curtains] three times, and the first speaks.¹¹⁰

Again the Chorus members each speak two lines, this time describing Wisdom, after which the characters comprised by The Smallest Crowd speak to the audience from behind the table, lauding Wisdom. The play ends with the singing of the *contrafact* referred to in the stage direction.

One of the most intriguing plays featuring a personification of the world is *World's Foolish Banquet*, by Louris Jansz.¹¹¹ As mentioned above, it is the only play in which the mankind character is called World. His three servants, Reckless Blossoming, Untamed Sensuality, and Fleeting Wealth, first appear on stage to announce World's banquet.¹¹² The supper will be held in a 'hall' ('sale'; l. 357)—probably behind an opening in the screen. There, or on the proscenium, stands a chair named False Hope (*Logenachtige Hoop*; l. 384), on which

109 Ibid. pp. 274–275: 'Wie isser, die mijn macht of heerlijkheid benijdt? / Wie isser soo verstuft en' hersseloos van willen, / Dat hij mij wederstreeft, en' derf zijn pijlen spillen / Op mij, des wereldts vrouw, die was voor alle tijdt?.'

110 Ibid. p. 284: 'De verthooneinge daer de Wijsheid haer Bancket houdt met de kleijnste Schaer, waer onder gezongen wordt op de wijze "Schoon lief gij sijt prijs weert alleen". De tusschen-spraken schuijven driemael op, ende d'eerste spreek'.

111 On this play, see Ramakers B., "Allegorisch-emblematische Bildlichkeit im Rederijkerdrama. Die Spiele des Haarlemers Louris Jansz", in Meier C. – Meyer H. – Spanily C. (eds.), *Das Theater des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit als Ort und Medium sozialer und symbolischer Kommunikation*, Symbolische Kommunikation und gesellschaftliche Wertesysteme 5 (Münster: 2004) 191–213, here 221–224.

112 They are identified as World's majordomo ('hofmeester'), 'cupbearer' ('schenker'), and 'chamberlain' ('kamerheer'), respectively. *World's Foolish Banquet* fol. 118v.

is a pillow called 'false freedom' ('valsche vrijheijt'; l. 386). World is set upon it. Even World's slippers have names: 'lie and deceit' ('loch en bedroch'; l. 416).

Two new characters, Serious Contemplation (*Ernstich Aenmerken*) and Humorous Observation (*Boertelick Aenschowen*), comment on this scene. They are further identified as follows: 'The one like Heraclitus cries for the World, and the other like Democritus laughs at the World.'¹¹³ The representation of World as a fool and the appearance of two characters modelled after these antique philosophers, inevitably bring to mind prints in which we see Democritus and Heraclitus laughing and crying on either side of a world landscape and/or a globe or *globus cruciger* within (or on) which, in turn, people may be seen behaving foolishly. One example is an etching by Crispijn van de Passe the Elder, *The Topsy-Turvy World* [Fig. 11.12];¹¹⁴ another, featuring a fool's cap draped over a *globus*, copies an engraving by Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert [Fig. 11.13].¹¹⁵

In the play, the two philosophers interpret the fool's cap as a sign of 'hidden foolishness' ('verburgen sotheijt'; fol. 614). Jansz's humanist orientation becomes even more apparent when Humorous Observation (Democritus) cites the Latin proverb, *Nemo laeditur nisi a semet ipso* ('No one is harmed except by himself'). Coornhert refers to it in his *Ethics*.¹¹⁶ The two philosophers take positions at either side of the stage, while World's servants lay the table. The former continue to comment on the coming banquet. They remark that 'all the good virtues' ('alle goede virtuijten'; l. 800) have not been invited—those who have, will soon become clear. Furthermore, they explain the meaning of the animal signs depicted on eight shields hung inside of the space behind the screen. They represent vices.¹¹⁷ Serious Contemplation (Heraclitus) remarks, with reference to World, that 'she may no longer, according to the Poets / Be

113 Ibid. fol. 123r: 'Dene Eraclitus gewijs beweent die Werlt en dander Democrates gewijs beweent [read: 'belacht'] de Werlt'.

114 Hollstein's *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, ca. 1450–1700*, vol. xv: *Van Ostade-De Passe*, ed. K.G. Boon – J. Verbeek (Amsterdam: 1964) 214 (no. 643).

115 Hollstein's *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450–1700*, Maarten van Heemskerck, comp. I.M. Veldman – ed. G. Luijten, 2 vols. (Roosendaal: 1994) 11, 160 (no. 475). Also see Veldman I.M., *Maarten van Heemskerck and Dutch Humanism in the Sixteenth Century* (Maarssen: 1977) 76–79 and fig. 52.

116 Coornhert D.V., *Zedekunst dat is wellevenskunste*, ed. B. Becker (Leiden: 1942) 165, 3.11.22.

117 The shields contain depictions of the following animals: adder (envy); basilisk (force); pig (gluttony); hyena (slander); peacock (pride); two vultures (avarice); wolf (hypocrisy); cancer (lethargy). *World's Foolish Banquet* fol. 126r–v.



FIGURE 11.12 Crispijn van de Passe the Elder, *The Topsy-Turvy World* (1574–1637). Etching, 238 mm × 269 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1911-291.

called the Golden World, [since] she rages excessively',¹¹⁸ an allusion to the classical idea of the golden age or *aetas aurea*, the legendary period of peace, prosperity, and happiness. Fleeting Wealth sounds the trumpet and announces the banquet to which he invites all estates.¹¹⁹ Four guests finally appear: Personal Profit (*Eijgen Baet*), Double Heartedness (*Dubbelt van Harten*), Secret Hate (*Heijmelijcke Haet*), and Deceitful Face (*Versiert Gelaet*), all 'commonly dressed' ('gemeensaem gecleet'; fol. 118v). They arrive bearing gifts: two turnips, a fox, a dead cat, and an ape, respectively. The gifts as well as the bread,

118 Ibid. ll. 888–889: 'sij mach niet meer nae twoort der Poeten / Die gulden werlt heeten, sij is alte verwoedich'.

119 It has the format of a so-called *spotmandement*, a parody of a proclamation, comparable to the one issued in *Fidelity*. By inviting all estates, society from high to low will be present, thus indicating the foolishness of the whole world. Compare the proclamation in *Fidelity* (see *supra* n. 62).



FIGURE 11.13 Copy of Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert after Maarten van Heemskerck, Democritus and Heraclitus or Allegory of the Vanity of the Human Passions (original 1557). Engraving, 227 mm × 253 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1963-258.

food, and drink on the table are interpreted allegorically.¹²⁰ As the banquet draws to a close, God's Voice (*Stemme Goodts*), 'watching over the stage' ('over

120 The 'turnips' ('rapen'; plural of 'raap') stand for the accumulation of money, 'rapen' also being a verb meaning 'to accumulate'. The 'fox' ('vos') is known for being 'deceitful of speech' ('bedrieichelick van monde'; *World's Foolish Banquet* l. 1122). The dead cat stands for dwindled love or charity, 'minne' meaning both 'cat' and 'love' in Middle Dutch. Secret Hate says that he kills love (ibid. l. 1138). Finally, the 'ape' ('simme') originates from Deceitful Face (ibid. l. 1156), since it feigns or apes. The bread is called 'hidden lies' ('versierde loogen'; ibid. l. 1298), the drink 'The sweat and blood of the poor' ('Tsweet en bloet der armen'; ibid. l. 1313) and the food 'manifold falsehood' ('menichfoudige valscheijt'; ibid. l. 1325).

taneel kijkende'; fol. 131v) from above, blows the horn and announces that the 'Day of the Lord' ('Dach des Heeren'; l. 1340) is coming. Then he comes on stage, dressed 'as an armed man' ('als een gewapent man'; l. 1471), and threatens the World and his/her guests.

Plays, Prints, and Rhetoric

The interplay of word and image in the plays and prints discussed is best understood as an expression of the *rhetoricization* of early-modern art and literature,¹²¹ whereby authors and artists in their method of composition and style adopted and adapted the principles and functions of classical rhetoric. Rhetorical usage not only underlined the interaction between word and image in the plays and prints, it also encouraged a more dynamic interaction between the characters on stage and in the prints, enticing auditors and viewers to reflect on what they had witnessed, discuss it amongst themselves, and finally decide on the proper interpretation. The desired result was a change of conviction or disposition that would impel constructive action. Although just one of many tropes at the author's or artist's disposal, personification became a very popular—perhaps even the most popular—rhetorical means for constituting word-image relations in theatre and art, and concomitantly, for generating thoughtful conversation. Personification was based on *prosopopoeia*, of the giving of a human face, mouth, and eyes,¹²² in short a human appearance, to an idea, a collective, a force, or a faculty—anything that needed to be vitalized in order to become imaginable, cognizable, and thus understandable in its essence, cause, and effect. Personification became the most important means of creating *enargeia* or *evidentia*,¹²³ the rhetorical principle of lively, invigorating description, of putting things before the eyes of the audience, which in the case of theatre and art could be done literally.¹²⁴

121 Plett H.F., *Rhetoric and Renaissance Culture* (Berlin – New York: 2004) 87.

122 Paxson J.J., *The Poetics of Personification*, Literature, Culture, Theory 6 (Cambridge 1994) 69.

123 Plett, *Rhetoric and Renaissance Culture* 98–99.

124 See, for example, Ramakers B., "Eloquent Presence: Verbal and Visual Discourse in the Ghent Plays of 1539", in Brusati C. – Enenkel K.A.E. – Melion W.S. (eds.), *The Authority of the Word: Reflecting on Image and Text in Northern Europe, 1400–1700*, Intersections: Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture 20 (Leiden – Boston: 2012) 218–261; and idem, "Sight and Insight: Paul as a Model of Conversion in Rethoricians' Drama", in Hendrix H. – Richardson T.M. – Stelling L. (eds.), *The Turn of the Soul: Representations of*

Seen from a rhetorical perspective it would be a mistake, therefore, to think that personifications in sixteenth-century prints of Lady World (or of any other moral or religious concept) are no more than highly stylized variations of popular iconographic themes, whose sole function was to demonstrate the designer's or engraver's artistic ability, and to please the viewer's aesthetic standards and sensibilities. No matter how anatomically drawn, lavishly dressed, and painstakingly ornamented these representations were—a reason, certainly, to admire and to enjoy them—they were also meant to embody essential, intricate, meaningful, and culturally embedded concepts about moral and religious behavior. The inscriptions we so often come across in the prints already point in this direction, but the pictures themselves, precisely through their sophisticated invention and execution, stimulated their viewers to meditate as well as verbalize the concepts visually embodied.¹²⁵ Play performance, too, was meant not only to delight, but to teach and to move—to cite the three goals of rhetoric (*delectare*, *docere*, and *movere*).¹²⁶ Like prints, plays aimed to stimulate thought and speech. In fact, *zinnespelen* were themselves exemplifications of a process of deliberation inside and between characters, upon which the spectators were expected to reflect. Their receptivity heightened by allegorical drama's enlivening perceptual, affective, and cognitive—including mnemonic—effects, they might then choose to emulate or assimilate the events and conversations they had just seen.¹²⁷ Thus, the plays attest to the rhetoricians' ambition—and apparent ability—to body forth fundamental truths and to claim a position in public moral and religious discourse.

Appendix 1

The plays are listed following their order in Hummelen's repertory of rhetoricians' drama (Hummelen W.M.H., *Repertorium van het rederijkerdrama 1500–ca. 1620* (Assen: 1968), revised edition: 2003, <http://www.dbnl.org/titels/titel.php?id=hummo0irepe01>). Each entry below consists of the play's *Repertorium* code, followed by its title and

Religious Conversion in Early Modern Art and Literature, Intersections: Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture 23 (Leiden – Boston: 2012) 339–372.

- 125 The prints and print series designed by Maarten van Heemskerck and engraved by Dirk Volckertszoon Coornhert are exemplary in this respect. See, for example, Veldman I.M., *Leerrijke reeksen van Maarten van Heemskerck* (The Hague – Haarlem: 1986); and idem, *De Wereld tussen Goed en Kwaad. Late prenten van Coornhert* (The Hague: 1990).
- 126 Plett, *Rhetoric and Renaissance Culture* 103–104.
- 127 Ramakers, "Eloquent Presence" 221–224; idem, "Sight and Insight" 345–346.

(if known) the author, the city or town of origin and/or performance, and the date of the play's manuscript or print and/or its performance. The editions used for this chapter are listed in the *Repertorium*, too. Four plays are from the Haarlem *Trou Moet Blijcken* collection and were edited after the *Repertorium*'s publication. See *Trou Moet Blijcken. Bronnenuitgave van de boeken der Haarlemse rederijkerskamer 'de Pellicanisten'*, ed. W.N.M. Husken – F.A.M. Schaars – B.A.M. Ramakers; coop. M.R. Hagendoorn – J.P.G. Heersche, 8 vols. (Assen – Slingenberg: 1992–1998), http://www.dbnl.org/auteurs/auteur.php?id=_troo01).

1. 1J10: *Reckless Life (Roockeloos Leven)*; Jacob Pieterse Rontsaet; Brouwershaven; written in 1636.
2. 1M7: *The Prodigal Son (De Verlooren Zoone)*; Robert Lawet; Roeselare; manuscript dated 1583).
3. 1M9: *The Master of the House (Den Vadere des Huusghezins)*; Robert Lawet; Roeselare; written in 1570.
4. 1M10: *All the World's Pleasure Is Idle (Al swerels ghebruucken ydelheyt)*; Robert Lawet; Roeselare; performed in 1571.
5. 10A8: *Those Who Trust in Comfort (Wie haer op troost verlaeten)*; Haarlem; performed in Gouda in 1546; *Trou Moet Blijcken* 1.
6. 10C8: *The Cornerstone (De hoecksteen)*; Haarlem; *Trou Moet Blijcken* 111.
7. 10D8: *World's Foolish Banquet (Werlts versufte maeltijt)*; Louris Jansz; Haarlem; *Trou Moet Blijcken* IV.
8. 10F7: *Simple Man and Illusion of Virtue (dEenvoudige Mensch en Schijn van Deuchden)*; Louris Jansz; Haarlem; *Trou Moet Blijcken* VI.
9. 1S6: *Fidelity (Die Trauwe)*; Hasselt; performed in 1595).
10. 1V4: *Wisdom's Invitation (De noodinge der Wijsheid)*; Abraham de Koning; Amsterdam; manuscript dated after 1619.
11. 2 01: *Man's Mind Seduced by the Flesh (sMenschen Gheest van tVleesch verleyt)*; Clodius Presbiter; performed in Antwerp.

12. 3L3: *Schiedam: Morality Play in Haarlem, 1606* (*Schiedam: spel van sinne in Haarlem 1606*); Jacob Dwinglo; Schiedam; performed in Haarlem in 1606.
13. 3P1: *The Christian Knight* (*De Christelijcke Ridder*); Rijssaert van Spiere; printed in Gouda in 1616).
14. 3P2: *Apocalypse 12, Verse 1* (*Apocalipsis 12, vers 1*), Rijssaert van Spiere; printed in Gouda in 1616).
15. 4 35: *Mirror of the Course of This World* (*Spieghel des loops deser Wereldt*); printed in Gorcum in 1620).

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Mute Poem, Speaking Picture: The Personification of the *Paragone* in Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*

Jennifer A. Royston

At the beginning of William Shakespeare's *The Life of Timon of Athens*, before Timon has even appeared onstage, a Painter and a Poet compete for Timon's patronage while analyzing each other's work. After the Poet describes his poem, the Painter retorts, 'Tis common : / A thousand morall Paintings I can shew, / That shall demonstrate these quicke blowes of Fortunes, / More pregnantly then words' (p. 81).¹ This opening scene has been referenced by scholars for decades, perhaps beginning with Anthony Blunt's seminal 1939 article, in which he recognized that this scene is 'an allusion to the "Paragone", or the quarrel and rivalry which had set the painters and poets of Italy against each other for two centuries'.² In the time since Blunt's observation however, little attention has been given to the manner in which the *paragone* is actually presented in Shakespeare's play. Therefore, this chapter examines how the interaction between the Painter and Poet moves our understanding of this discourse beyond Blunt's mere acknowledgement of this exchange. I propose that the Painter and Poet scene becomes so significant because of its use of personification, which creates a self-referential moment that mobilizes the debate to occur, via a distinctly reciprocal verbal and visual trope. In other words, staged personification, a trope that is used to bind verbal with visual, is used to dramatize a concept that deliberately pits these two forms against each other. I suggest that we consider the role of the verbal / visual nexus as it is presented through the inherently mixed medium of drama, and more specifically, through the dynamic trope of personification. By reading this opening scene as a personification of the *paragone*, we recognize that the trope's verbal / visual relationship actually works to subvert the *paragone* by collapsing the artificial boundaries that divide the two forms.

1 Quotations are taken from Shakespeare William, "The Life of Timon of Athens". *Mr. VVilliam Shakespeares comedies, histories, & tragedies, Published according to the true originall copies* (London, Edward Blount and Isaac Jaggard: 1623).

2 Blunt A., "An Echo of the 'Paragone' in Shakespeare", *Journal of the Warburg Institute* (1938) 260–262.

The *Paragone* in Renaissance England

According to *paragone* theories that support literature as the superior form, poets have the ability to create lifelike scenes through the mind's eye; *paragone* authors argue that evoking such a response is possible because of the assumed ability of poetry to reach not only the senses (as with painting), but also the mind. However, literary supporters often evoke elements of their competing form in an attempt to elevate their own medium. For example, although George Puttenham's 1589 rhetorical manual, *The Art of English Poesy*, does not take a definitive stance regarding the *paragone* debate, Puttenham's penchant for moving from aural to visual does suggest that he understood the benefit of blending media in order to explore and explain various elements of literature. In his text, Puttenham acknowledges implicitly that sight can aid in understanding poetry; in fact, he oscillates between the senses by using visual models throughout Book II to describe the aural qualities of poetry.³ When discussing rhyme, he writes:

And I set you down an ocular example, because ye may the better conceive it. Likewise, it so falleth out most times, your ocular proportion doth declare the nature of the audible, for if it please the ear well, the same represented by the delineation to the view pleaseth the eye well, and e converso. And this is by a natural sympathy between the ear and eye [...].⁴

In this way, Puttenham specifically advocates for a 'natural sympathy' between the aural and the visual, suggesting that the visual may aid the ear in understanding the nature of rhyme. In other ways, Puttenham manipulates the purported verbal / visual binary by seeming to purposefully subvert the established meaning of the rhetorical term *enargeia*. Editors Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhorn note that for the ancients, the rhetorical term 'involved the use of ornamental figures to make the listener see something vividly in the mind's eye'.⁵ They go on to explain that Puttenham's 'deliberate transformation' of the term—to affect the ear rather than the eye—is most likely Puttenham's way of situating the term within his prescriptive categories of figures of speech. In this

3 Puttenham Richard, "The Arte of English Poesie", in F. Whigham F. – Rebhorn W.A. (eds.), *The Art of English Poesy, Critical Companion* (Ithaca: 2007).

4 Ibid. 175.

5 Ibid. 227.

case, he categorizes *enargeia* within the figures of speech that affect the ear.⁶ Puttenham's destabilization of traditional verbal / visual categories becomes all the more relevant when placed within the context of Renaissance drama—a medium that blends verbal and visual. Specifically, if we refer to Puttenham's infamous definition of personification, or *prosopopoeia*, we recognize that this trope relies on the element of the visual, most obviously when it is used to materialize a personified figure on stage. For Puttenham, *prosopopoeia* is the act of attributing 'human quality, as reason or speech, to dumb creatures or other insensible things [...] to give them a human person'.⁷ Thus, personification assigns human qualities, such as reasoning or verbal communication, to nonverbal creatures or things that lack logic. Applying this definition to the *paragone* in *Timon*, we see that the verbal / visual nexus of personification is emphasized as the debate is afforded with physical bodies and speech that materialize on stage; the Painter personifies the sum of the arguments made in favor of the visual arts while the Poet certainly personifies arguments made for the superiority of the written form.⁸

Other Renaissance writers take decidedly stronger stances than Puttenham by ardently arguing for the superiority of the written form. And although these writers acknowledge the ability of the visual to capture the viewer, they naturally continue to profess allegiance to their own medium. Still, their acceptance of literature's visual tropes suggests that they are aware of the benefit of incorporating visual elements. In his 1595 *An Apologie for Poetrie*, for example, Sir Philip Sidney presents his simple definition of 'poesie as an arte of imitation', before moving on to elaborate that poetry is 'a speaking picture: with the end, to teach and delight'.⁹ This comparative analogy, along with Sidney's assertion that the purpose of poetry is to 'teach and delight' is essentially what informs the entirety of his argument. By positioning poetry as 'speaking picture', Sidney emphasizes the creative ability of the poet to evoke a visual response within the mind's eye of the reader. In this way, he argues that the poet is superior to other professionals within the humanities—here the

6 The other categories Puttenham establishes for figures of speech are those that affect the mind, and those that affect both the mind *and* the ear.

7 Puttenham, "The Arte of English Poesie" 324.

8 Frederick Kiefer describes the visual personification of the five senses within Timon's Maskers of Amazons performance. Timon's masque clearly parallels the Jacobean masque tradition, which as we know, relied heavily on personification. Jonson's *The Masque of Beauty* and *Chloridia* for example, give life to emblematic representations through personification. Kiefer F., *Shakespeare's Visual Theater: Staging the Personified Characters* (Cambridge 2000).

9 Sidney Sir Philip, *An apologie for poetrie. Written by the right noble, vertuous, and learned* (London, Henry Olney: 1595) fol. C4.

philosopher in particular—because the poet ‘yieldeth to the powers of the mind an image of that whereof the philosopher bestoweth but a wordish description which doth never strike, pierce, nor possess the sight of the soul so much as the other doth’.¹⁰

Essentially, Sidney does not argue that *all* writing is superior, as he distinguishes the philosopher’s banality from the poet’s personified picture—his *speaking pictures*. For Sidney, it is the imaginatively visual element of poetry that elevates its position.¹¹ And so like Puttenham, Sidney recognizes the power of the visual, but he manipulates this power to argue that the poet simply utilizes the visual to reinforce his own medium.

Conversely, poet and playwright Ben Jonson, who collaborated on the extravagantly visual form of the courtly masque, stubbornly laments the perceived power of the visual. Although Jonson’s views on the visual arts is often cited in reference to his contentious relationship with his stage designer, Inigo Jones (due in large part to his scathing portrayal of Jones in his *An Expostulation with Inigo Jones*), it is clear that Jonson’s participation with the *paragone* extends beyond a personal quarrel with his collaborator.¹² As D.J. Gordon clarifies, ‘[Jonson’s] more considered insults presuppose a body of doctrine: a serious doctrine of what the masque is to the poet; a serious doctrine of what the practitioner of the visual arts and particularly the architect is and does. Jonson is not criticizing only a man but a theory’.¹³ This is precisely what we see in Jonson’s 1640 *Discoveries*. Although he begins his argument by simply recalling theories of imitation sourced from antiquity and revisited by English authors and visual artists, he quickly moves on to create a greater tension between media by escalating comparative analogies found in antiquity to the antagonistic competition between the arts that flourished during the Renaissance.

10 Ibid. fol. D3.

11 Gavin Alexander clarifies that ‘*The Defence of Poesy* is a defence of imaginative literature’ and not reserved for literature written in verse. He argues that in part, this is why Sidney’s text has endured. Alexander G., *Sidney’s ‘The Defence of Poesy’ and Selected Renaissance Literary Criticism* (London: 2004).

12 Jonson’s quarrel with his masque designer, Inigo Jones has been well documented. See, for example, Orgel S., *The Illusion of Power: Political Theater in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley: 1975). For a thorough account of Jones’ professional accomplishments, see Peacock J., *The Stage Designs of Inigo Jones: The European Context* (Cambridge: 2009). Peacock describes Jones as an integral figure to English visual art, describing Jones as the mediator between Italian and English art.

13 Gordon D.J., “Poet and Architect: The Intellectual Setting of the Quarrel between Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones”, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* (1949) 152–178, here 153.

Jonson's argument, like others from *paragone*, emphasizes the response of the audience and the assumed superiority of the form to *move* the audience more effectively. He laments that visual art sometimes 'overcomes the power of speech and oratory', but that 'of the two, the pen is more noble than the pencil; for that can speak to understanding, the other but to the sense'.¹⁴ That is, while painting affects the viewer quickly and passionately through the sense of sight, poetry slowly and more meaningfully reaches the mind of the reader.

These three examples show that the core prerogative of *paragone* writers was to separate the arts further; however, the visual is not an enemy; paradoxically, it becomes an ally through such arguments, as authors rely on the visual form to explain and examine their own medium. Ultimately, as these examples illustrate, when Renaissance writers argued for the superiority of the textual over the visual, they could not help but concede to the necessity of the visual. The resulting fusion of form allows us to examine what Richard Meek has called the 'visuality of language and the textuality of the visual', and it is precisely this reciprocal relationship that I argue reveals the lie of the *paragone*.¹⁵

To explore the falsity of the *paragone* more fully, I first turn to Leonard Barkan, who quite lucidly explains that we have been 'forced to notice that even the most non-narrative images exist in a verbal nexus and that even the most non-pictorial poetry has been unable to define or theorize itself without analogies to the making of images'.¹⁶ Indeed, while exploring the historical separation of media that the *paragone* propagated, I have shown that we would be remiss to not also explore an analogous relationship. And as I will demonstrate, the use of dramatic personification serves to complicate the verbal / visual relationship and ultimately results in a refutation of representational boundaries. It is striking, for example, that while *paragone* texts function to separate the arts, a play like *Timon* should open with such arguments, and through the act of dramatic personification, create a hybridic relationship between forms. And when we consider the narrative of *Timon*, we recognize that within the dramatic representation itself, deliberate pressure is exerted upon the assumed representational restrictions situated upon each form. John Dixon Hunt probes such limitations through analyzing the Painter and Poet scene by suggesting that the Painter represents *pictura* while the Poet appears as *scriptura*—though not as personifications, but rather emblems of their

14 Jonson Ben, *Timber or Discoveries*, ed. R.S. Walker (Syracuse: 1953) 19–105, here 34.

15 Meek states this within his discussion of *The Rape of Lucrece*. Meek R., *Narrating the Visual in Shakespeare* (Farnham: 2009) 55–80, here 57.

16 Barkan L., "Making Pictures Speak: Renaissance Art, Elizabethan Literature, Modern Scholarship", *Renaissance Quarterly* 48.2 (1995) 326–351, here 330.

respective arts. However, Hunt finds this emblematic representation limiting and concludes that neither 'the verbal nor the visual by itself can represent Timon'.¹⁷ Hunt's reading suggests that the play deliberately questions the reliability of Renaissance emblematic code and consequently allows the dramatist to subtly elevate his own medium by using the dynamic form of drama to both visually and verbally represent Timon. In this way, he problematizes the role of Poet and Painter as 'emblematic' by concluding that 'emblems are too static for dramatic use' and 'the dynamics of theatrical experience are more complicated [...] than in the emblem'.¹⁸ While I agree with Hunt's assertion that the stasis we associate with the Renaissance emblem renders the form too stable to carry the Painter and Poet scene on its own, I do not see these characters as emblematic. Emblems, we know, must remain faithful to their specific composition so that they can be recognized upon a single glance and understood quickly through visual means. The Painter and Poet are not static representations of their forms; they have personal motivations, skills, and most of all, a vibrant verbal and visual stage presence. For these reasons I suggest that the act of personifying, rather than emblemizing these characters, results in a dynamic exchange that *enlivens* the debate and removes the representational boundaries the *paragone* proposed, thus making it appropriate for the stage.

The *Paragone* in *Timon of Athens*

Editor John Jowett refers to the despairing work of *Timon of Athens* as 'Shakespeare's least loved play'.¹⁹ Surrounded by false friends and greedy craftsmen eager to gain his patronage, the seemingly wealthy and exceedingly generous Timon faces ruin when he realizes that he is in severe debt. Worse yet, in his time of need Timon's friends fail to help him, causing him to flee his home and abandon his personal relationships. Timon quickly transforms into an animalistic misanthrope who dies alone in the woods; his epitaph reads, 'Here lie I, Timon, who alive all living men did hate'.²⁰ This somber epitaph

17 Hunt J.D., "Pictura, Scriptura, and Theatrum: Shakespeare and the Emblem", *Poetics Today*, 10,1 (1989) 155–171, here 164.

18 Hunt, "Pictura, Scriptura, and Theatrum" 155.

19 Shakespeare William – Thomas Middleton, "The Life of Timon of Athens", in Jowett J. (ed.), *The Oxford Shakespeare: The Life of Timon of Athens* (New York: 2004) 1. Jowett's edition discusses Shakespeare's collaboration with Thomas Middleton. Jowett notes that this collaboration could account for some of the play's apparent inconsistencies.

20 Ibid. 323.

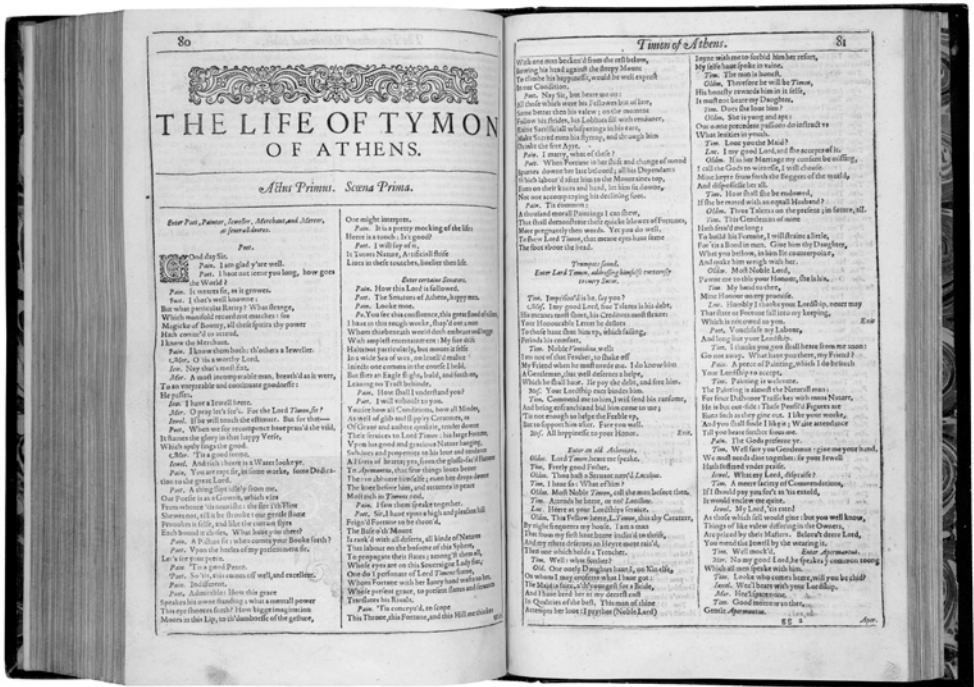


FIGURE 12.1 Title page of William Shakespeare, *The Life of Timon of Athens*. Mr. William Shakespeares comedies, histories, & tragedies: published according to the true originall copies (London, Edward Blount and Isaac Jaggard: 1623) 80–81. Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library.

signals the end of the bleak play, but it exists in stark contrast to the play's jovial opening when a poet, painter, jeweler, merchant, and mercer congregate at Timon's home in order to vie for the generous patronage he has apparently become known to provide. Most notably a Painter and Poet appear and within a few short lines, they begin to compete with one another as they present their respective work [Fig. 12.1].

Jowett explains that this opening interaction is layered in meaning; their competitive exchange is 'conditioned by an awareness of wealth and power'.²¹ That is, this scene is viewed in Renaissance ideology relating to hierarchy—financial, social, and artistic. To extend this notion, I argue that such an exchange serves a metadramatic purpose; as a poet himself, Shakespeare knows precisely and intimately what his characters are discussing. Therefore, provoked by

A.D. Nuttall's claim that the Painter and Poet 'are not so much talking persons as walking texts, speaking pictures',²² it is my view that this exchange in particular personifies the *paragone* and creates a uniquely self-referential moment that combines aural and visual. It is here that the play complicates the *paragone*'s restrictive boundaries by giving voice to the debate. The Poet is the first to engage with the opposing medium, and through his ekphrastic description, we gather that the painting is a flattering portrayal of Timon:

Admirable : How this grace
 Speakes his owne standing : what a mentall power
 This eye shootes forth? How bigge imagination
 Moues in this Lip, to th'dumbnesse of the gesture,
 One might interpret. (p. 80)

With these lines the Poet employs traditional praises for English Renaissance portraiture that focused on the realistic portrayal of the subject. In particular, his references to speech—'Speakes, Moues in this Lip, and th'dumbnesse'—suggest an acknowledgment of *paragone* arguments that claim that paintings, however realistic they appear, are still inferior due to their muteness.

We are familiar, of course, with the sort of Renaissance analogies that pertain to the perceived representational limitations placed upon each medium. Leonardo da Vinci's reiteration of the analogy is perhaps the best known. He argues: 'If you claim that painting [is] mute poetry, then the painter could say that the poetry [is] blind painting'.²³ We might also refer back to Sidney's *speaking picture* comparison, which works to further create an artificial distinction between media. In *Timon*, the Poet suggests that the Painter's work is so life-like that it can *almost* speak, so although he overtly praises the portrait, he maintains the traditional limitations the *paragone* established (a Renaissance version of a backhanded compliment). But, paradoxically, the tradition of English portraiture also condoned, and even encouraged, painted flattery; the Poet refers to this practice by commenting that Timon's portrait 'Speakes his owne standing'.²⁴ That is, the flattering image is appropriate for the seemingly wealthy and enormously generous Timon. But we know that the flattery the portrait offers Timon is false and rooted in the Painter's desire for monetary

22 Nuttall A.D., *Timon of Athens* (Hemel Hempstead: 1989) 1–141, here 16.

23 Leonardo [da Vinci], "The Paragone", in C.J. Farago (ed.), *Leonardo da Vinci's Paragone: A Critical Interpretation With a New Edition of the Text in the Codex Urbinas* (New York: 1992) 176–287, here 209.

24 Nicholas Hilliard's manual *A Treatise Concerning the Arte of Limning* discusses the role of flattery within portraiture.

gain; in actuality Timon is not the rich landowning Lord who is represented in the obsequious portrait; he is deeply in debt and ignorant of his impending fate. While not wholly accurate, the painting excels at capturing Timon as he *wishes* to be seen. Again, we know that this form of flattery was commonplace in Renaissance portraiture. David Howarth for example, describes Elizabethan portraiture as inherently emblematic; 'Anti-naturalism was a powerful element in Elizabethan portraiture. But what these images lose in allusion, they gain in illusion'.²⁵ In this way, the sitter's clothing or objects held in the hands or positioned in the background were able to be interpreted as saying something about the sitter. Understandably then, Timon's flattering portrait mirrors his own false representation of wealth. Thus, each representation of Timon—the portrait, the poem, and the play itself—reveals the palpable tension between forms and yet is also highly suggestive of the innate similarities that allow each medium to unite on stage.

While I would propose that the portrait is much more than an ornamental stage property, I must concede that it is *how* the Poet and Painter engage with it that creates its significance and allows it to foreshadow the larger conflicts yet to come—mainly, Timon's fall from fortune. Timon has yet to appear on stage and so the verbal description of his painted portrait is the audience's first insight into Timon. This important introduction to Timon's character sets the tone for the remainder of the play and it complicates our understanding of who he is when we recognize that the verbal description of the portrait does not come from the artist himself, but from the perspective of the Poet, who describes seeing the portrait for the very first time. By describing what he sees, the Poet is in a position to verbally guide the audience to imagine precisely what *he* interprets. In turn, it seems that the Poet complicates the audiences' lines of reception—both verbally and visually; we do not hear the Painter describe his own work, and we do not see what the Painter has *actually* painted.²⁶ What, then, are we left to interpret? Our ability to engage with the visual on our own terms seems to have been denied by the Poet, who verbally narrates specific elements of the portrait. Thus, the way in which we initially perceive Timon is the result of a complicated layering of ekphrastic and personified representations. In this way, it becomes tempting, as Meek and Barkan have observed, to theorize that what we initially 'see' of Timon is

25 Howarth D., *Images of Rule: Art and Politics in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley: 1997) 110.

26 For staging practicality, portrait miniatures may have been used. Miniatures were emblematic of adoration and flattery, which correlates to the context of the play. For more information on portrait miniatures, and Hilliard's particular contribution to the genre (including full length and cabinet miniatures), see Strong R., *The English Renaissance Miniature* (New York: 1983).

removed from Shakespeare's own dramatic representation—that somehow this 'well painted' portrait truly exists and is not simply a part of the play itself.

Therefore, when theorizing how visual and verbal work together, we must be aware of the power of *ekphrasis* and remain cognizant of our ability to discern representations from each other, especially within plays like *Timon* that so deliberately and thoroughly blur the boundaries of forms. We should acknowledge that we are confronted with several representations of Timon and while the indebted Timon might easily be characterized as the 'real' Timon, we cannot disregard that each of these versions belong within the single representation that is Shakespeare's play. Barkan has delivered his own warning to readers through his discussion of the literary history of *ekphrasis*: 'It is not a visual figure so much as a figure of speech, and like all tropes it is a lie. The specific figural activity is akin to *prosopopeia*, that is, the bestowing of a voice upon a mute object.'²⁷ While I acknowledge the literary rather than visual beginnings of *ekphrasis*, I must suggest that drama, as we have seen with *Timon*, works to problematize concrete distinctions between verbal and visual, especially when devices such as *ekphrasis* or *prosopopoeia* are introduced. In response to Barkan's work, Meek accepts that on one level, *ekphrasis* is undeniably a lie, but he goes on to state that of course all representation is a lie. 'Perhaps a more interesting question', he proposes, 'is why when it comes to *ekphrasis*, Barkan feels the need to remind us of the fact.'²⁸ It becomes clear that for us, the verbal / visual unification of the dramatic form represents the *paragone* in distinctively complicated and powerful ways. And for original audiences the immense popularity of the emerging dramatic form meant that the theater was uniquely positioned to express opinions about verbal and visual representations. Louis Montrose has identified the Renaissance theater as a 'uniquely threatening phenomenon because it was the physical and ideological site of convergence for a panoply of perceived innovations and perversions'.²⁹ While this potential influence dismayed those skeptical and even angry about the role of theater in English society, we recognize today the integral role drama played in both representing and subverting *paragone* principles.³⁰ Ultimately, literature that disrupts *paragone* traditions forces us to reexamine and question

27 Barkan, "Making Pictures Speak" 332.

28 Meek, *Narrating the Visual in Shakespeare* 77.

29 Montrose L., *The Purpose of Playing: Shakespeare and the Cultural Politics of the Elizabethan Theater* (Chicago: 1996) 35.

30 See Gurr A. – Ichikawa M., *Staging in Shakespeare's Theaters* (Oxford: 2000). For more on the conditions of original staging. For information on the anti-theatrical movement, see Howard J.E., *The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England* (Oxford: 1994).

what we think we understand about the boundaries of representation. And so, while *Timon* certainly represents the contentiousness of the *paragone*, its more important feature is that it actually works to collapse these verbal and visual distinctions by allowing us to experience the fascinating, albeit disconcerting effect of the 'visuality of language and the textuality of the visual'.³¹

Moving back to the play, we are then confronted with the Poet's description of his own work and the exchange that follows suggests more overtly that the Poet personifies the side of literature within the visual/verbal debate. When he describes his work to the Painter, he places it in direct opposition to Timon's portrait by suggesting its didactic purpose and implying that it more fully depicts Timon through its dynamic narrative, which is superior to static visual representations. He describes the subject of his work carefully, which includes the image of a personified Fortune: 'Sir, I haue vpon a high and pleasant hill / Feign'd Fortune to be thron'd' (p. 80). He goes on to describe how Timon looks upon the personified Fortune who, because of this initial interaction, favors him. But quickly, Fortune changes:

When Fortune in her shift and change of mood
Spurnes downe her late beloued; all his Dependents
Which labour'd after him to the Mountaines top,
Euen on their knees and hand, let him sit downe,
Not one accompanying his declining foot. (p. 80)

As with the portrait, we encounter the poem through a verbal description of its composition, and again, it is the Poet who describes the piece. This allows the Poet to retain autonomy over his own work, rather than relying on the Painter to describe its poetic significance. But even though the poem is described through verbal means, we would be remiss to not recognize its visual quality.³² The Poet's description suggests that his poem predicts the narrative of Timon's demise, which comes later in the play, after Timon's friends abandon him following the exposure of his immense debt. The Poet's aural description becomes imaginable to the audience through the mind's eye, due in part to the highly visual description of the personified Fortune. These lines result in a subtle shift of perception; the audience moves from receiving a seemingly verbal description that linguistically, is not unlike the rest of the lines spoken onstage, to being guided through an ekphrastic visual experience by the Poet himself. But

³¹ Meek, *Narrating the Visual in Shakespeare* 57.

³² The Painter himself even remarks that this description of Fortune would be "well expressed" through visual means.

the image the Poet describes is not unique; personifying fortune was of course commonplace for centuries, in both literary and visual sectors. Depictions of Fortune (*Fortuna*) enjoyed a prolific history, which emphasized the unpredictability of fate and the cyclical nature of life's highlights and downfalls.³³ Surely both verbal / textual and visual depictions of this kind inspired Shakespeare's description of the Poet's work. A visual example of this can be found in German artist Hans Sebald Beham's 1541 print of Fortune, which serves to demonstrate the conventional way in which fortune was personified. In *Fortuna*, a winged woman stands tall over the smaller and seemingly helpless figure that sits upon her wheel. While the Poet's description of Fortune understandably differs from Beham's example in some ways, the Poet uses conventional methods of depicting man's dependency on the unpredictable Fortune in artistically complex ways, which cross boundaries between visual and verbal [Fig. 12.2].

But in *paragone* fashion, the Painter must quickly retort by arguing that the Poet's work does not fully capture Fortune's shifts. He challenges the Poet: 'A thousand morall paintings I can shew / That shall demonstrate these quicke blowes of Fortunes / More pregnantly then words' (p. 81). It is in this moment that the argument most obviously draws upon artistic theories from both the Italian and English Renaissance. Leonardo of course refers to the immediacy of the sense of sight, which he deems superior to the longer process of hearing and comprehending poetry. He claims that there are times in which poems are not understood 'and so several commentaries are needed on them. These commentators very seldom understand what was in the poet's mind and many times the readers will read only a small part of their works for want of time; whereas the work of a painter is comprehended immediately by his onlookers'.³⁴ Leonardo's argument hinges upon the primary assumption that poetry is complicated and requires more time to comprehend, and the secondary assumption that these qualities prove its innate inadequacy. But even before Leonardo, Leon Battista Alberti made reference to the ability of painting to reach both the learned and the unlearned, a suggestion that implicitly places the visual arts above all others because, again, it has the inherent ability to reach more people than poetry.³⁵ Following this tradition, Richard Haydocke's later English translation of Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo's Italian text, *A tracte containing the artes of curious paintinge caruinge buildinge*, makes reference to the great pleasure a viewer can feel upon the very first momentary *glance* of a painting, thus

33 See Lisa Rosenthal's chapter in this volume.

34 Leonardo, "The Paragone" 221.

35 Alberti Leon Battista, "On Painting", in R. Sinisgalli (ed.), *Leon Battista Alberti: On Painting. A New Translation and Critical Edition* (New York: 2011) 33–96, esp. 63.



FIGURE 12.2 Hans Sebald Beham, "Fortuna" (1541). Engraving, 79 × 51 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-10.856.

suggesting that the visual medium in particular has the power to captivate the viewer instantly and without substantial commentary.³⁶

With these arguments in mind, we might return to the Poet in *Timon*, who describes the Painter's work as well as his own. This raises some questions regarding the role of the Poet: does allowing the Poet to describe his own work subtly imply that the Painter could not interpret the poems' meaning? Conversely, perhaps in Albertian fashion, the Poet was simply and subconsciously so moved by the realistic portrait that he became captivated by its appearance, and that is why he is first to describe it. Even still, Shakespeare might have subtly granted the Poet power that he denied to the Painter. But rather than perpetuating the *paragone* by deciding a winner in this debate, I simply wish to acknowledge the complicated role verbal and visual embody through this exchange. Personifying the *paragone* in this way draws attention to the pervasiveness of this discourse within Renaissance cultural circles, but it also complicates the binaries the *paragone* aimed to espouse.

Naturally, when Timon finally enters the scene, he confirms the play's dedication to dramatizing the *paragone* by perpetuating the perceived limitations placed upon poetry. When Timon enters, he pacifies the Poet and instead approaches the Painter in order to admire his work. And when the Poet presents Timon with the poem, he casually responds, 'I thanke you, you shall heare from me anon: / Go not away' (p. 81). His refusal to engage with the poem in any meaningful way recalls the aforementioned *paragone* arguments, which suggest that the visual best captivates the senses. Timon is subsequently enamored by his own representation, as he asks the Painter, 'What haue you there, my Friend?'. When the Painter presents his work to Timon, he responds rather bizarrely by contemplating the natural and artificial elements of the painting: 'Painting is welcome. / The painting is almost the naturall man: / [...] I like your worke, / And you shall finde I like it' (p. 81). Jowett suggests that these lines indicate its own nod to the realism of the portrait and further calls upon personification as Timon welcomes the painting as if it were a real—as he says, 'natural'—man. Essentially, when Timon faces the Painter and Poet, he confronts the physical embodiment of the *paragone* itself, making this form of staged personification both pictorial and literary while also paradoxically complicating a clear distinction between media. Following *paragone* theory, Timon quickly becomes involved with the painting as he comments upon its liveliness, through lines that seem to blur the division between 'the natural

36 Lomazzo Giovanni Paolo, *A tracte containing the artes of curious paintinge caruinge buildinge written first in Italian by Io: Paul Lomatius painter of Milan*, trans. R. Haydock (Oxford, Joseph Barnes: 1598).

man' and the unnatural man. Layers of verbal and visual representation cloud both our, and Timon's recognition of 'natural'. Who is the natural Timon, we wonder? This destabilization of our ability to discern levels of representation is the result of the verbal / visual nexus that occurs through personification. Wondering who the 'natural' man is, is an effect of the play's ability to collapse concrete boundaries between media through dramatization.

Conclusion

To conclude, I suggest along with Barkan, that through *Timon*, we see that 'even when we insist that poetry and painting lie separately, it turns out that they lie together'.³⁷ While *Timon* refers to the confines placed upon verbal and visual forms and purposefully uses these arguments to emphasize the falsity of Timon's presented self, the play never believes these arguments as it mobilizes these boundaries in order to blur the artificial divisions *paragone* discourse worked to establish. By problematizing the way in which audiences engage with the verbal and visual elements of drama, plays like *Timon* emphasize a more reciprocal role between forms, thereby subverting the very subject they represent. The mixed-media form of drama encourages implicitly, a blending of visual and verbal, especially through verbal / visual tropes such as *ekphrasis* and personification. In this way, the play not only dramatizes the *paragone* by means of personification, but also personifies, or embodies, the *paragone* itself through its own metadramatic performance of the *paragone*. That is, although the play pits the characters representing verbal and visual against each other, the play itself brings these forms together to stage that very discourse in a unified and singular multi-media production. And so while superficially, the play works to re-inscribe *paragone* boundaries, *Timon* actually dismantles them through means of verbal and visual performance; this resulting paradoxical dynamic is the operative of the play. And because *Timon* personifies the *paragone* itself, while so overtly challenging its boundaries, it becomes the clearest play to examine when considering the possibilities of reading Renaissance drama as subverting, rather than upholding *paragone* arguments.

By reading *Timon* as a play that establishes a more reciprocal role between the arts, I propose that we avoid perpetuating the *paragone* by recognizing the new tensions this partnership creates. This reading is directly applicable to a variety of Renaissance texts that exist concurrent to the rise of English artistic theory, thus affording us with many useful references to unfold the

37 Barkan L., *Mute Poetry, Speaking Pictures* (Princeton: 2013) 1–162, here 160.

tensions that arise between the arts. Recognizing how Renaissance literature manipulates these theories can result in new readings of texts that so masterfully problematize the verbal / visual nexus through the use of tropes such as personification. As I have argued, the effect of collapsing boundaries between media can illuminate our understanding of Renaissance visual culture and the dramatic experience. In this way, I suggest that we become more willing to reflect upon our *own* understanding of the boundaries between textual and visual.

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The Politics of Personification in the Jacobean Lord Mayors' Shows

Susan L. Anderson

Prosopopoeia, or personification, was the principal representational strategy of the London Lord Mayors' Shows of the early seventeenth century. Staged annually to mark the accession of the new Lord Mayor, the Shows were elaborate processions that made their way through the busiest streets of the heart of early modern London, pausing at various points for the performance of dramatic vignettes. These vignettes were complex pageants that typically featured allegorical figures representing abstract qualities, places, art forms, and acts. These figures were both embodied by living actors and depicted in iconographic decoration. The virulent anti-Catholicism of post-Reformation London means that the Show's relationship to its pre-Reformation predecessors is somewhat vexed. Nevertheless, the Shows recuperate the allegorical modes familiar from religious iconography and processional forms, such as saints' days celebrations, and mix them with comparable types such as exotic beasts and 'savage' men, recognisable from other earlier forms of street theatre and popular drama. These prior forms are reworked to articulate newer priorities, a transformation that reveals much about both the early seventeenth century context, and the mechanisms of *prosopopoeia* itself.

The early history of the London Lord Mayors' Shows is rather obscure, but notwithstanding the assertions found in the Shows themselves of their great antiquity and long tradition, it seems that it was only during the 1540s that the inauguration of the Lord Mayor began to be marked in more elaborate ways.¹ Near the end of the sixteenth century, the pageants started to be recorded in commemorative texts produced by the poet(s) who had been commissioned

1 Speculation on why this might be can be found in Paster G.K., "The Idea of London in Masque and Pageant", in Bergeron D.M. (ed.), *Pageantry in the Shakespearean Theater* (Athens: 1985), 48–64; Wickham G., *Early English Stages, 1300–1600, 111: Plays and their Makers to 1576* (London: 1981), 56; and Laroque F., *Shakespeare's Festive World: Elizabethan Seasonal Entertainment and the Professional Stage*, trans. J. Lloyd (Cambridge: 1991). Tracey Hill's definitive account of the Shows also engages with this issue: Hill T., *Pageantry and Power: A Cultural History of the Early Modern Lord Mayors' Show, 1585–1639* (Manchester: 2010).

to devise the themes and speeches for the year's celebrations, though this only became regular practice in the seventeenth century. The texts that survive offer us a partial glimpse of a form of theatre that synthesised a wide range of aesthetic and sensory possibilities, and encompassed quotidian space within its mythologizing scope. Unlike commercial theatre or courtly spectacle, the Shows took place publicly and were free and open to the entire community. They were available to a wider range of spectators and participants than any other early modern genre in English. Thus, they offer evidence for the kinds of representation that were most widely experienced and understood in early modern English culture. Their use of personification gives us a powerful insight into the ways that representation could be put to work in public spectacle.

The writer of the Show was responsible for more than just the text of the speeches and songs, as they also had to co-ordinate the design and building of the pageant cars, the making of costumes, and the hiring of actors, as well as procuring the printing of between 200–500 copies of a description of the event. There are records for 20 Shows between 1602 and 1626, showing that 9 were written by Anthony Munday, and 6 by Thomas Middleton, with one further Show shared between them. It is perhaps because of the extensive contacts and experience that would have been required to co-ordinate such a complex event that only a small number of writers were engaged for the task in the period under consideration.² But the repeated commissioning of these writers also implies a sanctioning of their rhetorical practices by the sponsors of the Shows, the London livery companies. This essay focuses on the representational strategies used in a selection of Shows by these two writers. It will argue that Middleton and Munday utilise the techniques of personification (and allegory more generally) to meet the conflicting demands of the genre by creating a purposefully opaque sense of esoteric meaning. Although critics in the past have tended to dismiss the genre because of its incoherence, this essay argues that, rather than a mistake, structured incoherence is in fact a deliberate element of the Shows' representational mode.

The livery company of the new Lord Mayor would start inviting proposals from the writers several months before the event, and sometimes in competition

2 The writer favoured most often by the guilds in the latter part of the sixteenth century appears to have been George Peele, two of whose Show texts survive. Ben Jonson, Thomas Dekker, John Squire and John Webster were employed to write the Lord Mayors' Shows for 1604, 1612, 1620 and 1624 respectively. Anthony Munday may also have contributed to the 1604 Show. For a discussion of the identity of the writers of the Shows, see Robertson J. – Gordon D.J. (eds.), *A Calendar of Dramatic Records in the Books of the Livery Companies of London, 1485–1640*, Malone Society Collections III (Oxford: 1954), hereafter referred to as MSC III.

with each other. The Shows were thus collaboratively produced expressions of the culture and power of the city elites, embodied by the livery companies. Their symbolic strategies are therefore deeply implicated in the political situation of early modern London at a time when global trade and proto-colonial practices were being instigated.

This essay begins with an examination of the way that trade and political structures are figured in the Shows, drawing a distinction between the political underpinnings of representation in the two writers' work, before exploring how they both blur early modern categorisations of rhetorical figures. It then discusses ways in which the texts intervene in the processes of meaning and the construction of their own relations to the events they represent, before showing that, ultimately, the texts themselves model the kinds of reading that they try to persuade the reader to engage in.

Hierarchies of Power

The clearest manifestation of the political ideologies underlying Munday's approach to the genre was apparent in his Monument to Drapery in *Himatia-Poleos* (1614), which recalls the hierarchical organisation of tableaux from court masques such as the House of Fame in Jonson's *The Masque of Queens*. Munday's description of the tableau shows how hierarchical thinking permeated the arrangement:

In the supream and most eminent seate, sitteth *Himatia*, or Cloathing, as Mother, Lady and commaundresse of all the rest, who by their distinct emblemes and properties, (apted for the easiest apprehension) doe expresse their dutie and attendance on so gracious a person, in their severall places and offices to them belonging; as in Carding, Spinning, Weaving, Rowing, Fulling, Shearing, Dressing, Dying, Tentering and performing all other services to woollen Cloathes (128–135).³

Himatia, or clothing, is a supreme, royal head of a hierarchy wherein each individual has a role to play along a chain of productivity in which there is no superfluity or waste. The figure at the top of the tableau is the final purpose

3 References to Munday's Shows are all taken from Bergeron D. (ed.), *The Pageants and Entertainments of Anthony Munday: A Critical Edition* (New York: 1985), and are given as line numbers after quotations in the text.

of the activities of those below her,⁴ and without her their roles would be meaningless. The chariot is guarded by Peace, Plentie, Liberalitie and Discreet Zeale, who 'supporte the flourishing condition of *Himatiaes* Common-wealth and strive to prevent all occasions which may seem sinister or hurtfull thereto' (137–139). This model of the commonwealth is one in which common gain can only be achieved by submitting to the figure at the top, whose benefit is thus understood to represent the benefit of all.

The symbolic link between the spatial arrangement of the tableau and the hierarchical nature of power is an example of the repeated use of visual symbols as analogies for abstract ideas in the Shows. Their practice of habitual metaphor is so pervasive that it is no overstatement to suggest that everything in the Shows is recruited to stand in for something else. In the same Show, for example Munday includes Henry Fitz-Alwin, the first Lord Mayor, as a character. He describes the previous methods of governing London that were attempted before Richard I instituted the office of Lord Mayor. These included the appointment of two bailiffs, an arrangement which not only did not work but 'could not please the king' because 'in two mens rule grew varying' (286–287). Plurality is not only impractical, he says, it is also against God's plan:

Therefore as God had given him place,
Solely to rule, and judge each case,
So he would plant a deputie
To figure his authoritie,
In the true forme of Monarchie,
Then which, no better soveraigntie (292–297)

The office of Lord Mayor is both successful in practice and morally acceptable because it follows the model of royal authority, which in turn is predicated on a paternalistic paradigm of the authority of God. The Lord Mayor has a position of power that follows the same pattern as the King's relationship to the kingdom, God's relationship to creation, and Himatia's relationship to the domain of clothing manufacture.

Munday's Show implies that the Lord Mayor, as the deputy of the King, owes his position to divine right. Consequently he is presented as self-evidently deserving of the pageant's praise. By contrast, Middleton's Shows conceptualise the entitlement of the Lord Mayor to praise rather differently. The very name of *The Triumphs of Honour and Industry* (1617) gives an indication of the way that this Show asserts an interdependence between the titular categories—both of

4 Gendering of figures is given as it is in the source text.

which appear as personified figures who speak in the Show. Industry proclaims herself to be 'the life-blood of praise' (72),⁵ emphasising that Fame depends upon the worthy behaviour of the individual, and that action is required to merit it. Rather than praise being something that those of high birth are simply entitled to, based upon invocations of ancestry, we are told that 'Fame waits their age whom Industry their youth' (76).

In terms of the pageant's scheme, honour-gaining activity is specifically economic. A figure representing Traffic holds a globe that symbolises how she, with Industry, 'knits love and peace amongst all nations' (61). Mercantile wealth-gathering is specifically portrayed as a socially beneficial act. The implication of this pageant is clearly that the achievement of aldermanic and mayoral status is an indication of having spent one's youth participating in the industrious activity that the pageant commends.

Despite this sense of the self-evidence of the Lord Mayor's entitlement to praise, the contingency of honour is emphasised in a slight but significant dramatic scene staged at the end of the Show. At the 'Castle of Fame or Honour' a character called Reward jumped up as soon as she saw the Lord Mayor and invited him to take the seat reserved for him 'to do thy virtues grace' at 'Fame's bright Castle' (193). Justice, however, stepped in, declaring that Reward had been too forward because the Lord Mayor must first prove himself before he can receive praise:

A whole year's reverend care in righting wrongs
And guarding innocence from malicious tongues,
Must be employ'd in virtue's sacred right
[...]
There must be merit, or our work's not right'. (199–201; 214)

In finding a triumphal rhetoric to suit his patrons, Middleton converts a discourse founded on aristocratic birthright to one in which the values of capitalist economic productivity are privileged, recruiting older kinds of symbolism to support the particular economic conditions of his own time and place. Figures such as Honour, Virtue and Fame retain their places in Middleton's pantheon, but are redirected to articulate the praise of industriousness and the accumulation of wealth through mercantilism and financial services.

5 References to Middleton's Shows are all taken from Taylor G. – Lavagnino J. (eds.), *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works* (Oxford: 2007), and are given as line numbers in the text.

Blurring Categories

Both Middleton and Munday complicate categories of representation in their Shows, blurring distinctions between the historical/real/literal and the metaphorical/performed/temporary. Etymologically, *prosopopoeia* suggests giving an abstract thing a *face*. This is emphasised by early modern rhetoricians, such as Richard Bernard, who describes it as 'the feigning of a person: when wee bring in dead men speaking, or our selues doe take their person vpon vs, or giue voice vnto senselesse things'. Bernard emphasises the emotional affect of the figure, asserting that it is 'very pathetical and moueth much if it be rightly handled'.⁶

Puttenham, on the other hand, divides the figure into separate categories, using the label *prosopographia* (the representation of persons who did exist at some point, or could have done). *Prosopopoeia* takes counterfeiting to a further level of feigning 'because it is by way of fiction' to

feign any person with such features, qualities, and conditions, or if ye will attribute any human quality, as reason or speech, to dumb creatures or other insensible things, and do study (as one may say) to give them a human person.⁷

Both Middleton and Munday, however, use these different figures interchangeably. The blurring of categorical distinctions is, I will argue, not an accidental incoherence, but instead a deliberate feature of the Shows' negotiation of their generic obligations.

The central conceit of Munday's 1605 Show *The Triumphs of Re-United Britannia*, is, as demonstrated by its title, clearly one of unification and combination. The antiquity of a unified Britain was a popular myth drawn on by Jacobean pageant writers seeking to redefine nationhood in the light of the unification of the crowns of England and Scotland on King James's accession to the English throne. Despite the unpopularity of the King's attempts to establish a union of the kingdoms (and, ultimately, their comprehensive failure),⁸ its rhetoric remained embedded in pageantry, which continued to eulogise his role in bringing the kingdoms together in his person. Munday

6 Bernard Richard, *The Faithfull Shepheard* (London, Thomas Brightman: 1609) K4r.

7 Puttenham George, *Art of English Poesy*, ed. F. Whigham – W.A. Rebhorn (Ithaca: 2007) 324.

8 According to Pauline Croft, the 1607 Parliament comprehensively destroyed the Union scheme. Croft P., *King James* (Basingstoke: 2003) 65–66.

therefore had to tread a fine line between pushing for the unification of three nations into a single state and maintaining an acknowledgement of their separate distinctiveness.

Unsurprisingly, Britannia is personified in the Show. Alongside her, however, are also the three constituent nations, Albania, Cambria, and Loegria who represent Scotland, Wales, and England respectively, suggesting a vision of separate entities blended together in a way that does not compromise their essentially distinct identities. All four are represented as female figures on the same principle as abstract qualities such as Fame, for example. However, each nation is also represented by a male pseudo-historical figure (Brute and his sons Albanact, Camber, and Lochrine). Each of these men is presented as the spouse of the relevant kingdom and the root of that kingdom's name. These male figures seem to be more 'real', active people (*prosopographia*, in Puttenham's terms), whereas the female figures are *prosopopoeia*, because they represent places. Thus, the relationship between these male figures and the territories they represent is more akin to the manner of the King himself. This mode can also be observed in the habit of referring to kingly or aristocratic characters in drama by their territories (e.g. 'our noble uncle, Lancaster' in Shakespeare's *Richard II*). Identity itself in this Show is masculine, in that all names are patronymics and the female figures all derive their names from men, not the other way around. This is clear from Munday's account of Brute's 'conquest' of Britannia's 'virgine honour' (159).⁹

This use of marriage to express the relationship between patriarch and territory is a stock metaphor of Renaissance political theory and rhetoric. It also surfaces repeatedly in the Shows, with London often being figured as the spouse of the Lord Mayor (most prominently in Munday's 1616 Show *Chrysanaleia* because of the pun on the surname of Lord Mayor John Leman). The marriage metaphor aptly gestures towards the Shows' simultaneous yet contradictory impulses to join discrete categories together, whilst insisting on their distinctness. The obvious gender dynamics at play here demonstrate that the Shows use their symbolic resources to imagine the dominance of the individuated masculine elite over the abstracted, feminised multitude of the city or nation.

A similar pattern of differentiated levels of representativeness can be seen in Middleton's *Triumphs of Honour and Virtue* (1622). In this pageant both Indian and English bodies are represented, but there is a key distinction between the way in which these representations are described in terms of clothing. One set of actors are described in metaphor as 'Indians in antique habits' (45–46).

9 The same pattern of naming, gendering and type of representation is repeated with the three rivers also personified in the Show.

Another set are enumerated and described literally: 'three habited like merchants' (46–47). This subtly closes off the possibility of subjectivity and reality for types of people, identified by clothing (and, implicitly, complexion) as foreign and/or alien.

The three actors who represent the merchants are densely representative on several further levels. As Middleton's text explains, the Lord Mayor and both Sheriffs of the city were all members of the Grocers' Company that year. To signify this, the three men who held these positions the previous time that this coincidence had occurred are, according to the text, also represented by these three actors, 'matched and paralleled with these three [...] as worthy successors' (106–107). On one level, then, the individuated English bodies, prosopographically representing people actually present at the Show, are set against a vague and undefined 'Indian' anonymity. But, on another level, the text seems to suggest that they also represent Commerce, Adventure and Traffic, abstractions personified as a holy trinity of mercantile virtues.¹⁰ The distinctions here are clearly meant to collapse, associating these qualities with the men whose achievements were being celebrated.

As Gordon Teskey notes, allegory oscillates between 'negative and positive others', and establishes a hierarchy whereby 'the former, positive sense of the 'other' as a higher, abstract meaning reflects back on a literal narrative that is 'other' in a negative sense'. Indeed, Teskey suggests that the hierarchy between these two values is the point, because it postulates a 'transcendental otherness that we situate above the world in order to make that world, as the macrocosm, coincide with the self'.¹¹ The Shows, however, whilst maintaining this interplay, confuse its directionality. It is not always clear what the positive, primary, or 'literal' element of the figure is. So in terms of the three figures from *The Triumphs of Honour and Virtue*, whether the merchants (real, historical, and fictional) are 'like' abstractions or the other way around is undetermined.

A further example can be found in Middleton's *The Triumphs of Love and Antiquity* (1619), which included a 'Parliament of Honour' that featured representations of 24 royal or aristocratic members of the Skinners' Company, described as a kind of 'ornament' to the Show. Their ornamental quality is explicitly stated as acting in both directions: they are 'adorning their adorners' (276).

10 The text is somewhat ambiguous here, and could be read to mean that Commerce, Adventure and Traffic are a further three figures in the pageant. I interpret the passage to mean that they are embodied by the same actors.

11 Teskey G., *Allegory and Violence* (Ithaca: 1996) 6–7.

The impossible vision presented of the simultaneous appearance of historical figures from different time periods turns them from people into figures of meaning. Thus, objects can be people, but people are also objects, adorning the Show. Middleton insists on their historical veracity in the printed text, listing (seemingly rather random) facts about them, ranging from endowments made and military victories won, to hunting and dining habits. The inconsistent approach (some figures get several lines of text; others only get one or two) generates a sense that such figures are more like mythological or fictional characters who represent one thing, too impressionistically sketched to seem like real people.

In one sense, the meaning of these figures is subordinated to the cause of elevating the status of the real people present at the event that the figures are being recruited to celebrate. The Mayor and Aldermen are being paid an extravagant compliment by their presence. But at the same time, the assertion of 'presence' made by these figures simply emphasises their absence. Only their avatars are available, and even these need copious explanation and glossing, both in the speeches on the day and in the commemorative text. The effect generated is that the signified behind these signifiers is even farther away than it might first appear. As these texts seek to close down this distance, more gaps become possible.

The Danger of Misreading

This explains why the danger of misreading is consistently, paranoiacally raised by the printed texts. In the same Show, *The Triumphs of Love and Antiquity*, Middleton imputes such misreading to the fault of 'over curious and inquisitive' readers (296–297), a typical gesture in such texts. Despite this refusal to take responsibility for misinterpretations, we have seen that Middleton nonetheless affixes a list explaining who the figures in his Parliament of Honour were supposed to be. He states that this will ensure that the display 'may arrive at a clear and perfect manifestation' (295–296). Whilst there is clearly a sense here that the textual manifestation of the allegory will be a flawless one, this usage of 'perfect' also reflects the now obsolete meaning of being finished and complete (*OED* sense 3). Thus, the Show is incomplete (and flawed) until it has been recorded and explained by textual description.

In discussing Geoffrey Whitney's 'normative model' of the emblem, Michael Bath identifies a tripartite structure in which the 'emblem presents us with an epigram which resolves the enigmatic relation between motto and picture by appealing to received meanings which its images have in established icono-

graphic systems of Western culture'.¹² Notwithstanding Bath's caution against describing pageant devices as 'emblematic',¹³ the combination of visual symbolism, textual explication, and combined meaning does provide us with an emblematic mode of meaning-making.

An example of this interdependence can be found in instances where pageant texts describe their subjects in ways which cannot have been apparent during the event itself. For example, in *Camp-Bell* (1609) Munday describes the pageant-car of the Insula Beata as floating 'upon the calm Sea of discretee and loyall affections' (63), and in *Sidero-thriambos* (1618) he describes Fear and Modesty as 'both veiled, but so sharp-sighted that they can discerne through the darkest obscurities, when any disorder threatneth danger to *Majesty*, or to his carefull Deputie' (181–183). It is difficult to imagine how this veiled sharp-sightedness might have been conveyed to the crowds visually, or how the metaphor of the sea of loyalty could possibly have been conveyed by a moving pageant car.¹⁴

The texts of the Shows operate in the same way as emblem inscriptions therefore, explaining the visual figures and the relation between them to indicate the moral message of the presentation as a whole. Middleton's most obviously emblematic Show is *The Triumphs of Truth*, as can be seen in the costume descriptions given in the printed account. Error, for example, sits with 'his head rolled in a cloud, over which stands an owl, a mole on one shoulder, a bat on the other, all symbols of blind ignorance and darkness, mists hanging at his eyes' (246–249). Next to him, his champion, Envy, rides a rhinoceros whilst 'eating of a human heart' (250). She is dressed all in red 'suitable to the bloodiness of her manners' (251–252) and the gory picture is completed with a snake suckling her left breast and a bloody dart in her right hand. These symbols, and others in the same Show, are standard modes of representation, lifted straight from the emblem books of Ripa and Valeriano.¹⁵ Their meaning is confirmed by the text's allusions.

12 Bath M., *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture* (London: 1994) 74.

13 Ibid. 24.

14 Additionally, the printed accounts of the Shows may have portrayed the performances as more successful than they were in the event; they are an idealised version of the event, rather than an accurate representation. For example, with regard to *Camp-Bell*, the Ironmongers' Company complained that Munday 'performed not his speeches on land, nor the rest of his contracted service' (MSC III, 77).

15 MSC III, xxxix.

The explanatory gloss of the Shows is not solely contained within the descriptive text. For instance, Munday's pageant characters often self-consciously introduce themselves and their purposes. Henry Fitz-Alwin in *Metropolis Coronata* (1615), for example, declares that he is speaking 'on behalf of the honourable company of Drapers, who made no spare of their bounty, for full performance of this dayes solemne Honor' (279–281). Munday's descriptions also seem very conscious of the artifice of pageant devices, for example describing the character presented in *Himatia-Poleos* as 'the supposed shadow' of Sir John Norman (154). In performance the character himself also drew attention to his fictionality, instructing the Lord Mayor to 'imagine me to be the true resemblance of olde Sir *John Norman*' (160–161). A similar effect occurs in *Metropolis Coronata*, when Henry Fitz-Alwin announces 'the borrowed shape I beare / Of olde Fitz-Alwine' (74–75). The speeches are an explanatory text for an essentially emblematic display, whether they are heard at the event or read subsequently in the text.

Munday appears to concede a certain amount of leeway in the matter of interpretation in his presentation of the emblems of his 1616 Show *Chrysanaleia*. The inclusion of a crowned dolphin is explained as 'alluding som way to the Lord Maiors coate of Armes, but more properly to the Companies, and therefore may serve indifferently for both' (84–86). Though Munday seems here to acknowledge the possibility of multiple interpretations, this is rather part of the text's overall strategy of placing the origin and guarantee of meaning squarely with the sponsoring livery company. This is supported within the text by Munday's statement that

our devices for that solemne and Joviall day, were and are accordingly proportioned, by the discreete and well advised judgement of the Gentlemen, thereto chosen and deputed

This is also borne out by the note in the Fishmongers' Company records that suggests that Munday was obliged to employ nominees of the company in the business of preparing the Show, and to incorporate their ideas into his plans.¹⁶ Munday's emphasis on his own acquiescence to his sponsor's requests maintains a sense of an externally-fixed meaning that the text does not create, but grants access to.

Similarly, in *Sidero-thriambos* (1618) Munday appeals explicitly to common knowledge. He declares that all of the personages portrayed 'have all Emblemes

¹⁶ MSC III, 90.

and Properties in their hands' so that even those of the 'weakest capacity' will understand 'the true morality of this devise' (189–191). Paradoxically, however, later in the Show, the character of the 'Brittish Barde' declines to 'expresse' the meaning of 'Thaese Shewes and Emblems' for fear of 'tediousnes', and instead directs the Lord Mayor to wait 'Until thilke Buke, whilke speaks them aw' (257–261). The actual details of the Show's meaning, then, hover somewhere elsewhere, in between the performance and the printed text.

In Middleton's Shows, the descriptive texts ascribe to themselves absolute authority, as is strikingly shown in the opening passage of *The Triumphs of Love and Antiquity*. It starts with the stock conceit of establishing the superiority of London's triumphal forms over those of 'foreign nations' (22) – a typical slippage which works to situate London as a nation rather than a city. The text continues:

there is fair hope that things where invention flourishes, clear art and her graceful proprieties should receive favour and encouragement from the content of the spectator, which, next to the service of his honour and honourable Society, is the principal reward it looks for; and not despairing of that common favour—which is often cast upon the undeserver, through the distress and misery of judgement—this takes delight to present itself (25–33).

It is difficult to discern here who the grammatical subject of the sentence is and what the antecedents of the pronouns 'it' and 'this' are. The circuitousness of the tortuous expression in this passage is in itself an indication of the text's concealments and verbal decoys. Ultimately, though, the grammatical subject here is the text itself, presenting itself to the reader. As we saw above, Middleton conceptualises the text as the element that completes the 'perfection' of the Show as a whole. Here, we discover that the text is personified as an agent seeking the approval of the (uncommon) reader, but only if the reader submits to the text's own interpretation of itself. The poor judgement of some is asserted to manipulate the reader into the opposite position, one which coincides with accepting the text's own assertions about its own status and its relationship to the event it describes.

This self-reflexive locution is characteristic of Middleton's Show texts to the extent that it becomes formulaic. For example, *The Triumphs of Truth* (1613) describes itself with the phrasing 'thus the form of it presents itself' (85–86). Similarly, *The Triumphs of Honour and Industry* (1617) uses 'it begins to present itself' (39). The phrasing 'this takes delight to present itself', cited above from

The Triumphs of Love and Antiquity (1619), is repeated exactly in *The Triumphs of Honour and Virtue* (1622) and *The Triumphs of Health and Prosperity* (1626).¹⁷ These texts personify themselves as the perfected form of the events they describe. The event is past and irretrievable, now mythologised, whereas the text positions itself in the category of the 'real'.

Conclusion

Political structures, especially a divinely-sanctioned monarchical hierarchy, constitute objective external fixities that the texts gesture towards but can only name obliquely. This is not only because of the risks involved in naming and committing to particular political configurations within a volatile public sphere, but also because direct naming would undo the power of the symbol being invoked. The referent is always out of reach, and the circuits of representation in the texts work to conceal this by creating a self-referential, self-reinforcing linguistic domain. To generate the impression of a fixed external reality, the text must impressionistically suggest it, but never define it, to allow the reader to fill in the deficiencies with their own understanding.

Here, Teskey's description of the way that allegory 'elicits continual interpretation as its primary aesthetic effect' is a useful formulation to apply to the Lord Mayors' Shows. Like allegories, they are 'incoherent on the narrative level, forcing us to unify the work by imposing meaning on it'.¹⁸ The Lord Mayors' Shows are not allegories per se, but they do use personification to concretise the political interests of the elites that they represent. The texts present us with a set of personifications whose relationships seem like a puzzle for which there must be a solution. Earlier scholars responded to this challenge with spot-the-reference descriptiveness, as well as complaints about how incoherent these texts are.¹⁹ If we recast this incoherence as a feature, not a mistake, we can see more clearly how the kinds of personification used enable the writer to account for the disparate and competing interests spoken for and to, in and by the Shows. The printed textual descriptions of these events are one element of a polysemic genre, whose inconsistencies were well-suited to both represent and instantiate the situation of the city and its inhabitants.

17 Self-plagiarism is also a common feature of the Show texts, especially in their formulaic preambles and other elements that might be considered paratextual.

18 Teskey, *Allegory and Violence* 4–5.

19 This approach is epitomised in Bald R.C., "Middleton's Civic Employments", *Modern Philology* 31 (August 1933) 65–78.

These texts offer us models of the ways in which we can represent the past, a relationship which is paralleled in our own readings of the texts themselves. Though we must acknowledge the impossibility of finding out, in Pierre Nora's phrase, 'what actually happened',²⁰ these texts also offer us another, even more tempting prize—what it 'actually' means. Whilst this category, too, is an imaginary one, its motivations enable us to gain insight into how meaning works, and show how personification was a key strategy in the simultaneously concealing and revealing textual practices of the early modern period.

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20 Nora, Pierre, *Realms of Memory*, trans. A. Goldhammer (New York: 1996) xxiv.

PART 5

Jesuit Approaches to Personification



Figured Personification and Parabolic Embodiment in Jan David's *Occasio Arrepta, Neglecta*

Walter S. Melion

In the prefaces and dedications of his four emblem books—*Veridicus Christianus* (*The True Christian*, ed. prin., 1601), *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* (*Occasion Seized, Shirked*, ed. prin., 1605), *Paradisus sponsi et sponsae, et Pancarpium Marianum* (*Paradise of the Bridegroom and Bride, and Marian Garland*, ed. prin., 1607), and *Duodecim specula* (*The Twelve Mirrors*, ed. prin., 1610)—as also in many of the emblems proper, the Jesuit emblematiser Jan David propounds a general *doctrina imaginis* that construes sacred images as key instruments of spiritual reflection, instruction, and renewal [Figs. 14.1–4].¹

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- 1 For bibliographic data on David's four emblem books, see Backer Aug. de – Backer Al. de – Sommervogel C., *Bibliothèque de la compagnie de Jésus*, 9 vols. (Brussels: 1890–1900; Paris: 1890–1932) 11, cols. 1844–1853; Daly P.M. – Richard Dimler G., S.J., *The Jesuit Series, Part One (A–D)* (Montreal etc.: 1991) 147–162; and Imhof D., *Jan Moretus and the Continuation of the Plantin Press*, Bibliotheca Bibliographica Neerlandica, Series Major III, 2 vols. (Leiden: 2014) 1, 221–223 (*Duodecim specula*), 224–227 (*Occasio*), 227–229 (*Paradisus et Pancarpium*), 229–234 (*Veridicus Christianus*). A brief but trenchant account of David's place within the Dutch literary canon appears in Porteman K. – Smits-Veldt M.B., *Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur, 1560–1700* (Amsterdam: 2009) 134, 294–296, 484. On David's image theory as it relates to the Jesuit understanding of the *imago*, see Dekoninck R., *Ad imaginem. Status, fonctions et usages de l'image dans la littérature spirituelle jésuite du XVII^e siècle* (Geneva: 2005) 194–196, 286–297, 312–324, 339–349. On David as emblematiser, see Dekoninck R. – Guiderdoni-Bruslé A. – Vaeck M. van et al., *Emblemata Sacra: Emblem Books from the Maurits Sabbe Library*, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven [exh. cat., Maurits Sabbe Bibliotheek, Leuven; Francis A. Drexel Library, Saint Joseph's University, Philadelphia] (Philadelphia: 2006) 29–31, 55–62; and Daly P.M., *The Emblem in Early Modern Europe: Contributions to the Theory of the Emblem* (Farnham, Surr. – Burlington, VT: 2014) 126, 192. The *Veridicus Christianus*, unlike the *Occasio*, *Paradisus*, and *Duodecim specula*, was first written in Dutch, then translated into Latin by David himself, who enriched the exegetical apparatus; on the *Christelijken waerseggher* and its relation to the *Veridicus Christianus*, see Waterschoot W., “*Veridicus Christianus* and *Christelijken Waerseggher* by Johannes David”, in Dekoninck R. – Guiderdoni-Bruslé A. (eds.), *Emblemata Sacra: Rhétorique et herméneutique du discours sacré dans la littérature en images* (Turnhout: 2007) 527–534; and Imhof, *Jan Moretus* 1, 234–236. On the joint involvement of the publisher Jan Moretus and printmaker



FIGURE 14.1 Workshop of Philips Galle, Title-Page, *Veridicus Christianus*. Engraving, in-quarto. In Jan David, S.J., *Veridicus Christianus* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana: 1601).

THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY, CHICAGO.

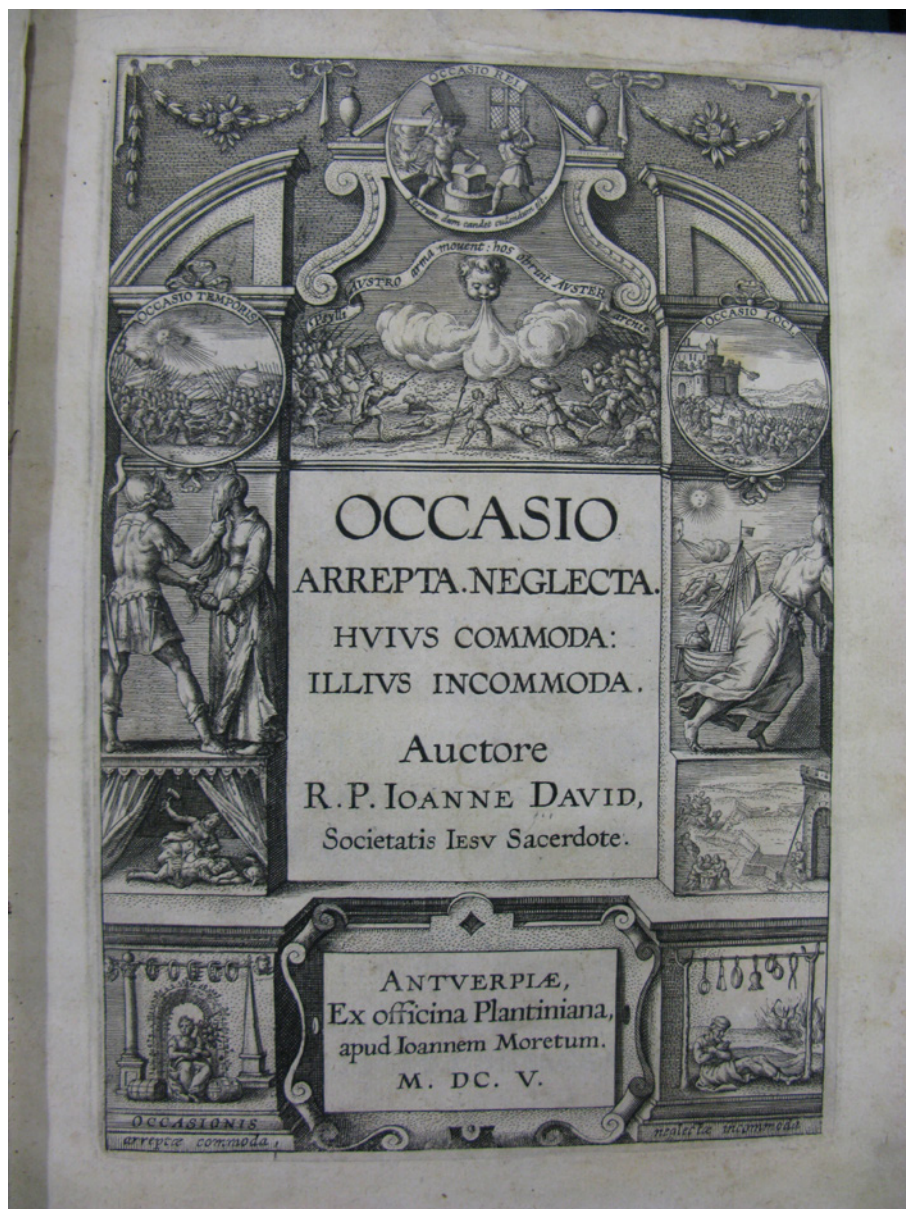


FIGURE 14.2 *Theodoor Galle, Title-Page, Occasio. Engraving, in-octavo. In Jan David, S.J., Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605).*
THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY, CHICAGO.

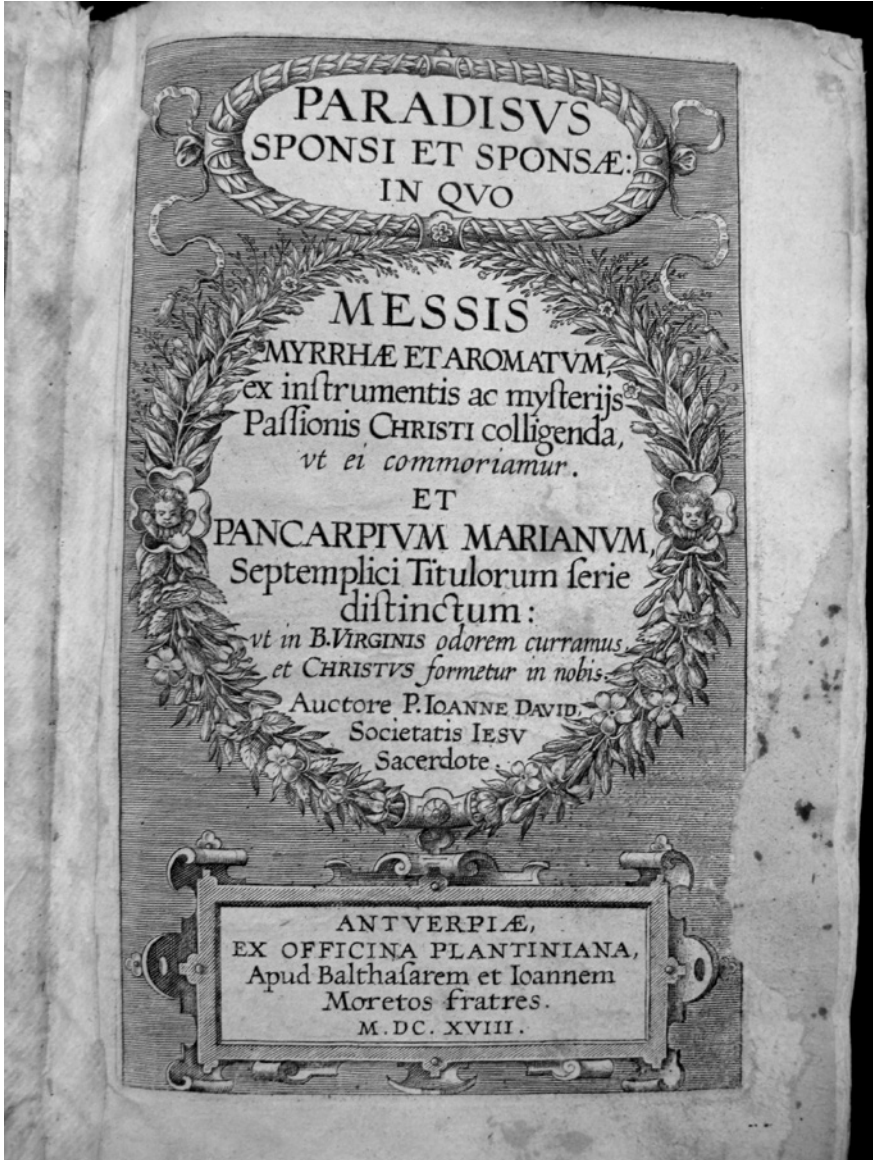


FIGURE 14.3 *Theodoor Galle, Title-Page, Paradisus. Engraving, in-octavo. In Jan David, S.J., Paradisus sponsi et sponsae: in quo messis myrrhae et aromatum, ex instrumentis ac mysterijs Passionis Christi colligenda, ut ei commoriamur. Et Pancarpium Marianum, septemplici titulorum series distinctum: ut in B. Virginis odorem curramus, et Christus formetur in nobis (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1607; reprint ed., Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Balthasarem et Ioannem Moretos fratres: 1618).* THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY, CHICAGO.



FIGURE 14.4 *Theodoor Galle, Title-Page, Duodecim specula. Engraving, in-octavo. In Jan David, S.J., Duodecim specula Deum aliquando videre desideranti concinnata (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1610).*
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He characterizes meditative prayer—the process his emblems are designed to facilitate—as a method of fixing the *imago Christi* within the votary's mind, heart, and spirit. Just as a skillful painter, explains David in the dedicatory preface of the *Veridicus Christianus*, diligently strives to express after the life (*advivum*) whatever he judges worthy of imitation, so a true Christian (*veridicus Christianus*) must steadfastly endeavor to portray within himself the life and teachings of Christ, thereby the better to imitate them, as if they had actually been seen, heard, and recorded *ad vivum* [Fig. 14.5].² The *Occasio arrepta*, *neglecta* fulfills this mimetic function by exploring a distinctive paradigm of the emblematic image: as David points out in his "Preface to the Reader", the book's twelve emblems originate in the conversion of a pagan idol—the winged and changeable goddess Occasio, famously portrayed by Phidias and described by Ausonius—into a prosopopoeic device capable of carrying a

Philips Galle in the production of the *Veridicus Christianus*, see Sellink M., "Joannes David, *Veridicus christianus*", in Imhof D. (ed.), *The Illustration of Books Published by the Moretus* [exh. cat., Plantin-Moretus Museum, Antwerp] (Antwerp: 1996) 88–89. On the *Occasio* and its eponymous *dramatis persona*, see Mylryan J., "A Parochial Twist on a Secular Proverb: Occasio's Bald Pate and the 'Opportunity' to Be Good in Joannes David's *Typus Occasionis* and *Occasio arrepta*", *Emblematica* 16 (2008) 133–150. On the *Paradisus* and its corollary embedded emblem book, the *Pancarpium Marianum*, see Delfosse A., *La 'Protectrice du Païs-Bas': Stratégies politiques et figures de la Vierge dans les Pays-Bas espagnols* (Turnhout: 2009) 215–216; Melion W.S., "Meditative Images and the Portrayal of Image-Based Meditation", in Melion W.S. – Dekoninck R. – Guiderdoni-Bruslé A. (eds.), *Ut pictura meditatio: The Meditative Image in Northern Art, 1500–1700* (Turnhout: 2012) 7–60, esp. 32–60; and idem, *The Meditative Art: Studies in the Northern Devotional Print, 1550–1625*, *Early Modern Catholicism and the Visual Arts* 1 (Philadelphia: 2012) 334, 336–339. On the *Duodecim specula*, see Waterschoot W., "Joannes David Editing 'Duodecim specula'", in Manning J. – Vaec M. van (eds.), *The Jesuits and the Emblem Tradition: Selected Papers of the Leuven International Emblem Conference, 18–23 August 1996* (Turnhout: 1999) 353–364; and Melion W.S., "Scriptural Authority in Word and Image", in Brusati C. – Enenkel K.A.E. – Melion W.S. (eds.), *The Authority of the Word: Reflecting on Image and Text in Northern Europe, 1400–1700*, *Intersections: Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture* 20 (Leiden – Boston: 2012) 1–46, esp. 22–37. The standard literary biography is Geerts-Van Roey L. – Andriessen J., S.J., "Pater Joannes David S.J (1546–1613)", *Ons geestelijk erf* 30 (1956) 113–155; also see Andriessen J., "Leven en werk van Joannes David s.j. 1546–1613", *West-Vlaanderen: tweemaandelijks tijdschrift voor kunst en cultuur* 12 (1963) 220–224; and Mûelenaere J. de, "De Jezuïeten in en uit Kortrijk, 1583–1993. I. Het begon met Joannes David, 1546–1613", *Avond (Brugge)* 23.6 (1993) 35–46.

- 2 David Jan, S.J., *Orbita probitatis ad Christi imitationem Veridico Christiano subserviens*, in idem, *Veridicus Christianus* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana: 1601; reprint ed. Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana: 1606) 353.



FIGURE 14.5 *Theodoor Galle, Frontispiece, Orbita probitatis ad Christi imitationem Veridico Christiano subserviens. In Jan David, S.J., Veridicus Christianus (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana: 1601).*

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Christian meaning [Fig. 14.2].³ The goddess is transformed emblematically into the personification of Opportunity ‘seized’ (*arrepta*) or ‘shirked’ (*neglecta*) as the respective occasion of doing what is good or bad. In turn, this process of conversion is compared to that of converting the meditator into a true follower of Christ, capable of seizing every opportunity of imitating him.

***Schemata* (Sensory Images), *Sinnekens* (Embodied Vices), and the Personification Occasio**

David employs the term *schemata* (sensory images) to designate the sequence of twelve emblematic *picturae* in the *Occasio*, thus emphasizing that his personifications are ‘figurative images’ (*‘imagines figuratae’*), to be seen, parsed, and interpreted, rather than ‘idolatrous effigies’ (*‘imagines idololatriae’*), to be revered *per se*.⁴ They are inserted into narrative situations that resemble episodes from a theatrical *spel van sinne*, a dramatized argument enacted by allegorical characters, including *sinnekens* who embody vices [Figs. 14.9–10]. Indeed, the book incorporates, as an appendix, the full text of David’s “Occasio”, the school play on which he drew for the emblematic *interlocutores*, *scenae*, and *schemata* [Fig. 14.6]. The principal *dramatis personae*, the twelve-part story of whose mutual interaction and encounters with other personifications the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* chronicles, are Occasion (*Occasio*), Time (*Tempus*), and Guardian Angel (*Angelus Tutelaris*) who bodies forth the imperative of Divine Will (*Nutus Divinus*) [Fig. 14.9–10]. These *personae* are seen repeatedly to engage with five prudent and five imprudent youths who function as exempla, rather than as personifications: they stand for the emblem book’s morally and spiritually malleable users, and accordingly, they are compared by David to parabolic entities such as the wise and foolish virgins in *Matthew* 25:1–13 [Figs. 14.10–20].

3 David Jan, S.J., “Praefatio ad lectorem”, in *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huius commoda: illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605) fols. ++1r-++3r, esp. ++1r-++2r.

4 The term *schema*, as Erich Auerbach argues in his seminal essay on figural interpretation, refers to perceptual or outward form or shape. When paired with or subsumed into *figura*, it implies that the process of figuration is phenomenal, which is to say, perceptible to the senses. David, in using *schemata* to designate the emblematic *picturae*, emphasizes their visibly pictorial status and, collaterally, he insists on the fact that they are populated by embodied characters and characterful personifications with whom we may sensibly interact. See Auerbach E., “Figura”, in idem, *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature*, trans. R. Mannheim, *Theory and History of Literature* 9 (Minneapolis: 1984) 7–76, esp. 14–15.

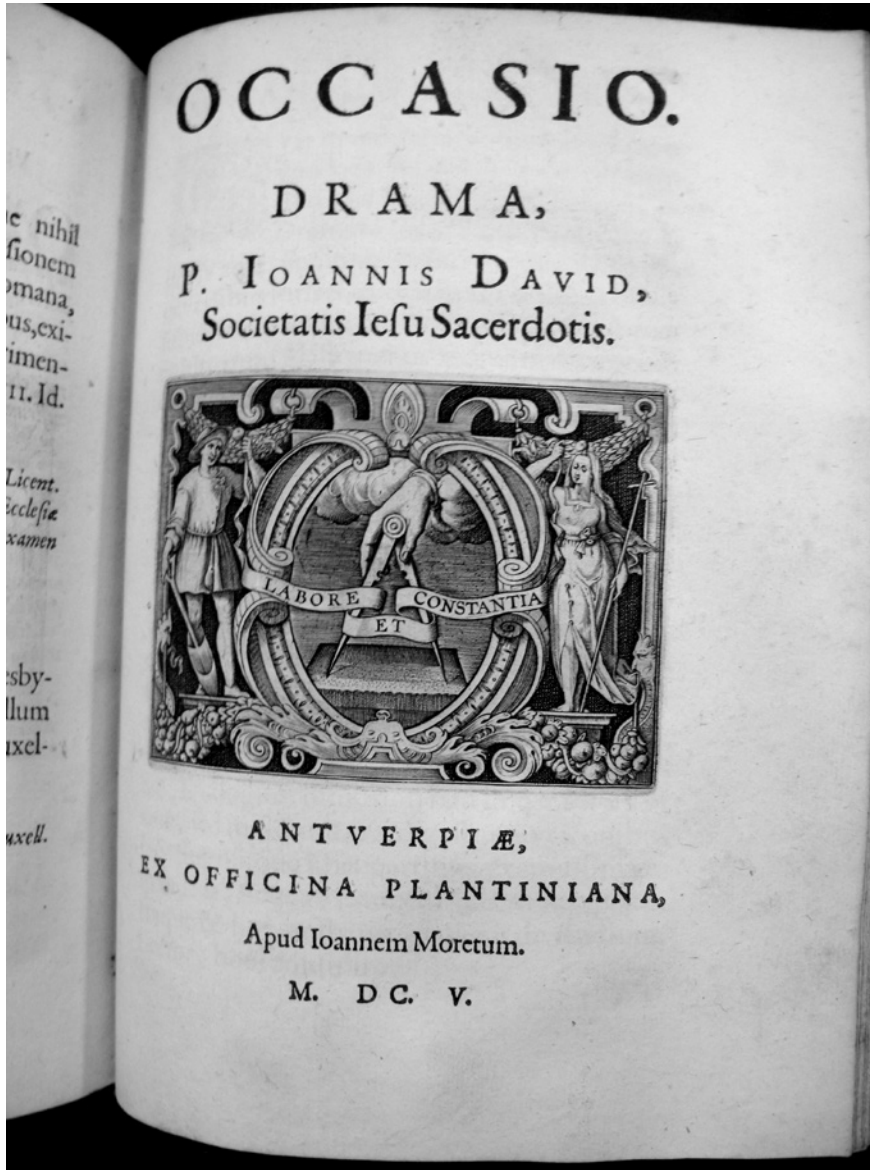


FIGURE 14.6 *Theodoor Galle, Fronstispiece, "Occasio. Drama". In Jan David, S.J., Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda. (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605).*

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Occasio arrepta, neglecta is thus a new kind of emblem book, its *schemata* consisting of embodied exempla and personifications whose performative interactions bring to life a series of dramatic situations resembling those of an allegorical *spel van sinne*. Likewise distinctive is the book's tripartite apparatus—first, the play text [Fig. 14.6]; second, the twelve *schemata* each of which operates emblematically, comprising a motto, pictorial image, and dialogic epigram [Figs. 14.9–20]; and third, the twelve chapters that comment on the nature of the exempla and personifications, and elaborate upon the moral, affective, and spiritual consequences of their actions, as well as unfolding their attendant thought processes [Fig. 14.7]. The question I want to pose is how do the personifications operate within these three parts and also across them. This issue is worth raising, since David was the Jesuit order's foremost emblematiser, and his diverse emblem books, mainly published by Jan Moretus of the Officina Plantiniana, were not only beautifully produced but also widely disseminated. David's investment in emblematics surely aligns with the codification of *emblemata* as an advanced rhetorical exercise within the Jesuit *Ratio studiorum* of 1599.⁵ His books modify these hermeneutic exercises, changing them into meditative spiritual exercises for a wider public of elite reader-viewers.

The reader's preface introducing part 3 of the book, the allegorical play titled "Occasio, drama", explains that David wrote this script both to amuse himself and as an exercise for students of 'tender age'. Having composed it in simple verses for their benefit, he then extracted selected passages, causing them to be engraved onto the twelve plates of his print series, the *Typus occasionis*, first published by the engraver-publisher Theodoor Galle in 1603. These prints have now been incorporated into the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*, wherein they serve to anchor the book's twelve chapters. In order to harmonize the prints and chapters with the play whence, as he claims, the whole book originated, he has renamed the play's twelve acts *schemata*, thereby insisting on the mutual relation between the pictures and the dramatic episodes: 'I should wish to advise

5 For the rule pertaining to emblematic *concertatio*, see "Règles du professeur de rhétorique [386]", in Demoustier A. – Julia D. (eds.), *Ratio studiorum. Plan raisonné des études dans la Compagnie de Jésus*, trans. L. Albrieux – D. Pralon-Julia, annot. M.-M. Compère (Paris: 1997) 170. On the rules pertaining to the public display of *affixiones* (emblematic devices) on festive days, see "Règles du préfet des études inférieures [244]", "Règles du professeur de rhétorique [392, 404]", and "Règles de l'Académie des rhétoriciens et des humanistes [519]", in *ibid.* 133, 172, 179, and 213 respectively. Professors of Rhetoric were instructed to encourage their students to engage with emblems, even on vacation days, as a way of cultivating erudition; see "Règles du professeur de rhétorique [389]", in *ibid.* 171.

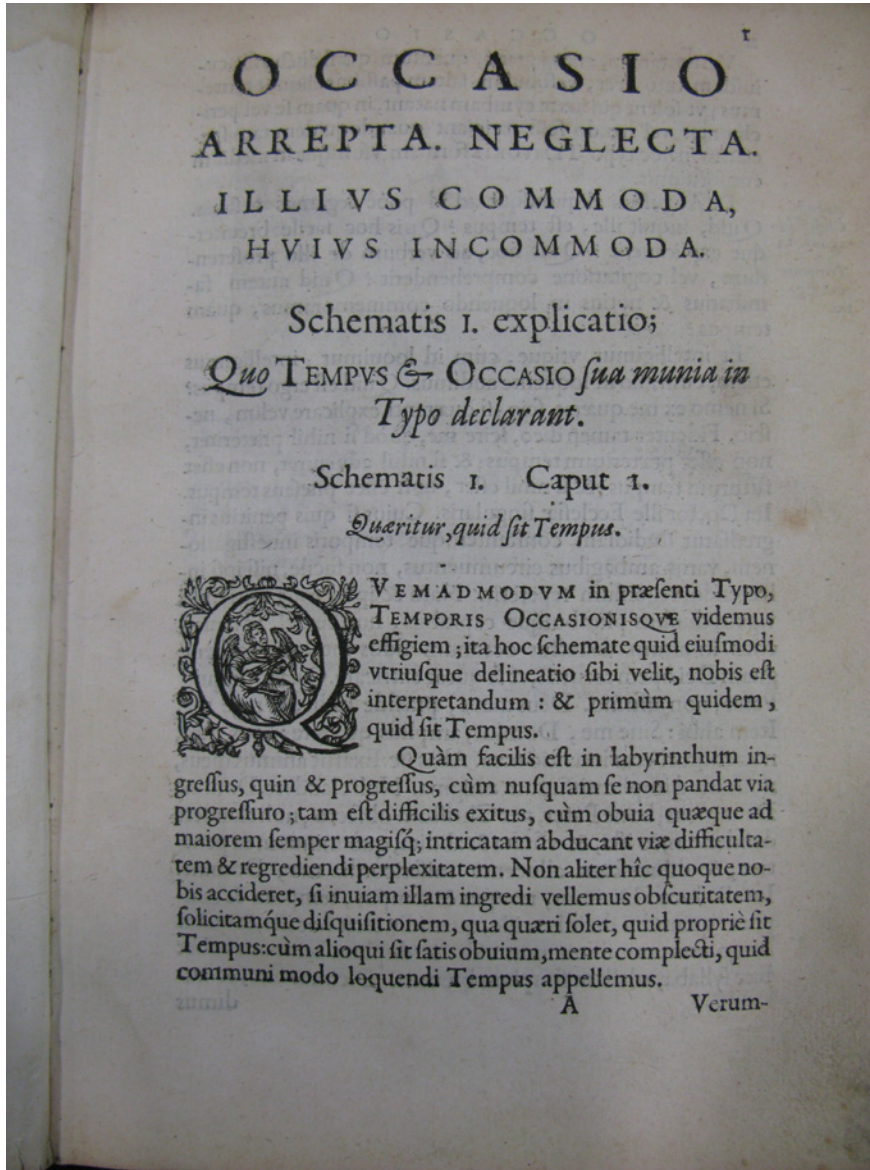


FIGURE 14.7 Jan David, S.J., "Schematis I. explicatio; Quo Tempus & Occasio sua munia in Typo declarant." In *idem*, *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huius commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY, CHICAGO.

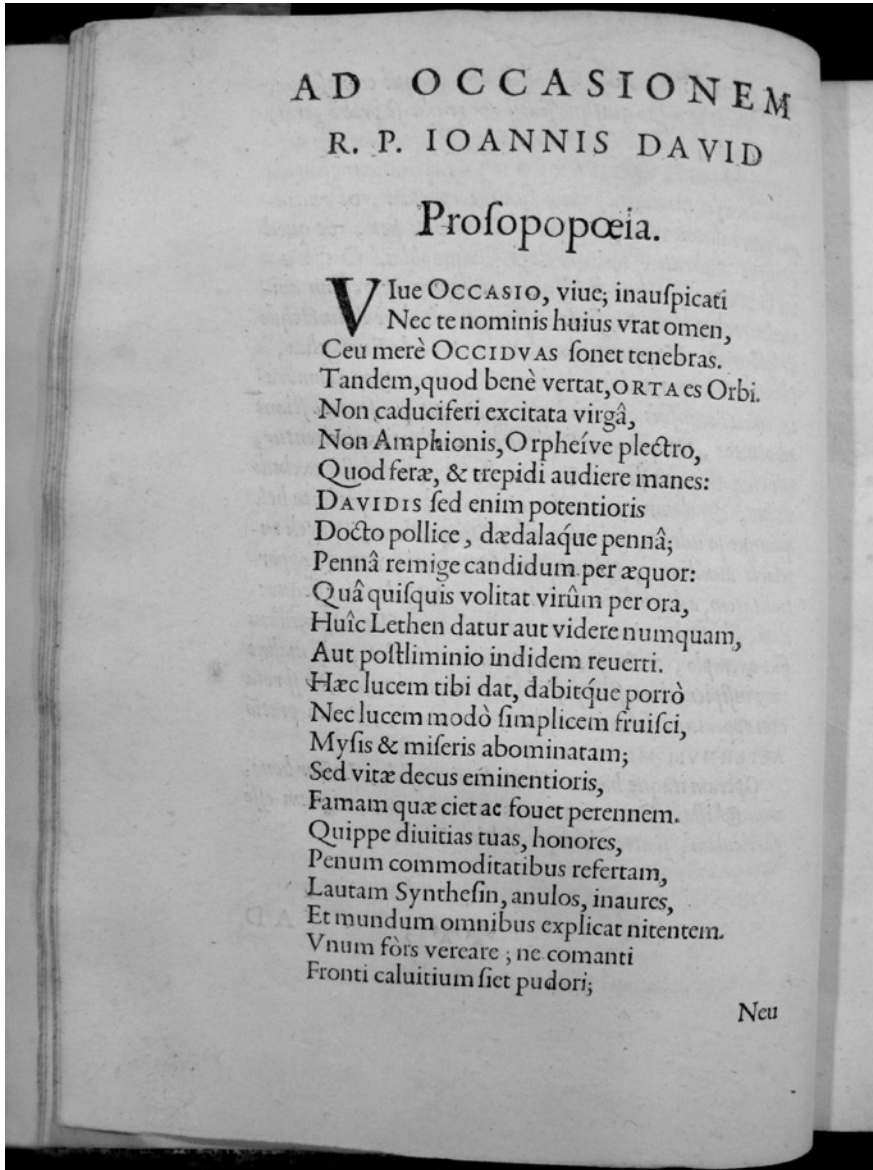


FIGURE 14.8 A Jan David, S.J., "Ad Occasionem R. P. Ioannis David Prosopopœia." In *idem*, *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (*Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605*).
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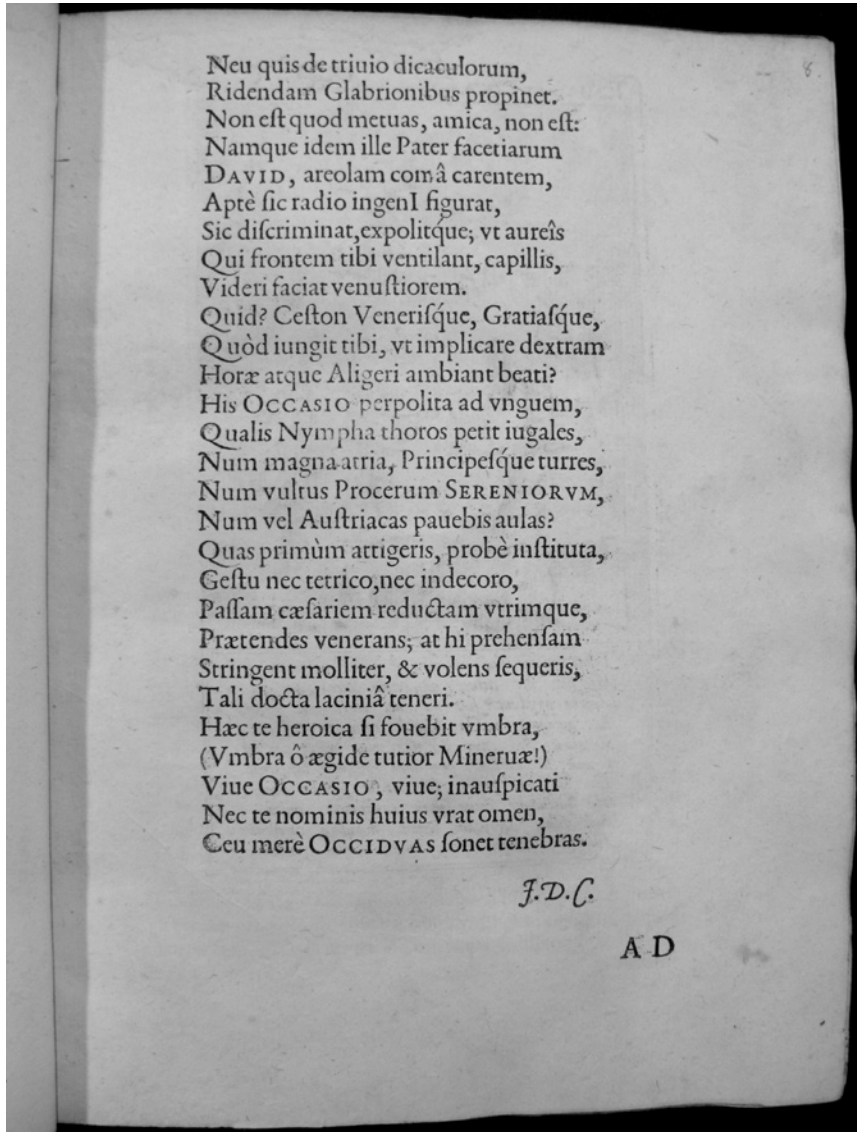


FIGURE 14.8 B Jan David, S.J., "Ad Occasionem R. P. Ioannis David Prosopopoeia." In *idem*, *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605).
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you, at any event, that this Dialogue is no longer subdivided into scenes, as it was previously, but instead into *Schemata*; in order that it should respond precisely to the pictorial images and the book's parts, which may thereby illuminate each other'.⁶

As David states in the general preface to the whole book, the play's two main prosopopoeic protagonists, whether they appear in the play, the *schemata*, or the chapters, are to be appreciated as Christian reformulations of pagan deities in whom, however, these sacred personifications were already latent, as if waiting to be discerned and brought forward.⁷ Citing the *Statuarum descriptiones* of Callistratus, he argues that the Greek god *Occasio* was portrayed as male, his Latin counterpart as female, but for Christians like David, who acknowledge God alone to be the sole author of all things, the pure gold hidden deep within the base metal of the goddess *Occasio*, awaits conversion: 'let us prudently and earnestly transform it', he urges, speaking in the present tense, 'for the utility of the Christian religion and our own salvation'.⁸ The personification Occasion, in other words, as she appears throughout the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*, must be seen as if newly emergent or, better, newly emerging from this pagan integument. She is ours to possess, like hereditary property duly inherited, or like the spoils of Egypt first seized by the ancient Israelites (*Exodus* 12:35–36), and now metaphorically conferred on the Church as an ornament fit to be worn.⁹ By this David means that she personifies a concept that derives from, even as it alters, the ancient notion of Occasion. He describes this notion genealogically, rather than endowing Occasion with a fixed identity: she descends, in the first place, from the Stoic virtue Modesty (*Modestia*), the 'science of putting in their proper place the things to be said or done';¹⁰ since finding the proper place to act requires that an opportune time be chosen, Occasion was implicitly associated with 'timely opportunity' or, more accurately, with the accommodation of time to action ('tempus actionis opportunum'). And so, Modesty came to be

6 David, "Occasio, drama", in *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* 273: 'Hoc interim te monitum velim, Dialogum hunc non iam in Scenas ut ante, sed in Schemata digestum; ut iconibus ipsis singulisque libri patribus examussim respondeat, sicque ab invicem lucem accipiant. Itaque & hoc nostrum qualequale studium, Lector, boni consulito'. David also mentions the *Typus occasionis* in the "Praefatio ad lectorem", in *ibid.* fols. ++2v-++3r.

7 David, "Praefatio ad lectorem", in *ibid.* fol. ++1r: 'aurum quod in abdito Occasionis recessu velut sinu delitescit'.

8 *Ibid.*: '& in Christianae Religionis salutisque propriae utilitatem prudenter & serio convertamus'.

9 *Ibid.*

10 *Ibid.* fol. ++iv: '[Modestia, inquit, secundum Stoicos,] est scientia earum rerum, quae aguntur & dicuntur, loco suo collocandarum'.

understood as knowledge of the opportunity for timely action, and Occasion, in a lineage from Modesty, as that 'part of time having in itself the opportunity of doing or not doing something properly'.¹¹

The personification of Occasion proves even more malleable, for it refers both to the opportune moment and to the thing that opportunely occurs in this moment, and in addition, to the apt place in which that thing takes place. The usage of the term 'Occasio' thus implies the melding of time, place, and the thing itself, and as such, further implies the reification of the moment or, conversely, the temporalization of whatever duly takes place within it. The moment and the thing, in functioning as prosopopoeia, are concretized and temporalized, for as David puts it, they are visualized as if 'seasonably coming to life round about or in view of you', that is, as if 'occurring before your eyes and furnishing you, either by fate or chance, with a timely opportunity'.¹² This is why the ancients, avers David, portrayed Occasion as substantial yet transient, embodied yet volatile, a Nymph with winged ankles, setting foot upon a swiftly rotating wheel, and holding a dagger with one side sharpened, ready for any task, the other side blunt, unsuited for anything. The dagger signifies that she is momentarily opportune to some, inopportune to others, as destiny or mere chance decrees.¹³

David enlarges upon Occasion's appearance by quoting Ausonius's extended epigram on Phidias's cult statue of the goddess, popularized by Politian:

I am that Goddess rare and known to few.
 Why do you set foot upon a wheel? I can stay in no place.
 Why do you wear winged sandals? I fly; what Mercury
 Is wont to prosper, I abandon once having flown.
 Why does your hair cover your face? I do not wish to be known. But, ho
 there!
 The back of your head is bald. To ensure that my departure brooks no
 delay.
 Who is the companion beside you? Let her speak for herself. Speak, I say,
 who are you?
 [...]

11 Ibid.: '[Occasio, inquit.] est pars temporis, habens in se alicuius rei idoneam faciendi aut non faciendi opportunitatem'.

12 Ibid. fols. ++1v-++2r: 'cum & tempus illud opportunum, & res ipsa tam tempestive proveniens, circum & propter te, & velut ob oculos tibi cadat, atque occasu vel eventu suo Occasionem tibi praebeat opportunam'.

13 Ibid. fol. ++2r.

I am the goddess who punishes the deeds done and left undone.
 And as this gives cause for complaint, so I am called Regret (*Metanoeia*).
 Now you, tell me, what has she to do with you? When I [Occasio] have
 flown,
 She remains: they whom I have passed hold her close.
 You, too, while you question, while you delay by asking,
 Shall say that I have eluded your grasp.¹⁴

Ausonius, by adding the figure of Regret, stresses that it is incumbent upon whomever Occasion visits to seize her, rather than leaving such opportunities entirely to chance or fate. He also describes her, as would David, with bald pate and hair falling over her face, which is to say, graspable by her tresses when she is first encountered, but ungraspable from the rear once she has passed. Her masked countenance indicates that she is difficult to know: if she is to be handled, she must first be recognized, which entails quickness of wit and discernment.¹⁵ David then inserts a crucial disclaimer: when he caused the *Typus occasionis* to be engraved, only those features of Occasion deemed relevant for the acquisition of eternal salvation were retained. He clearly means those attributes susceptible to a Christian reading: namely, her hair-veiled face and otherwise hairless head; her capacity to give joy to those who restrain her, and sorrow to those who, having been slow to act, now find her elusive. He asserts: 'we judged it unnecessary to follow in all things the visible traces of the ancients; but instead we took from their descriptions what chiefly seemed worthy of consideration. Inasmuch as what might well have been shown here,

14 Ibid.: 'Sum Dea, quae rara & paucis Occasio nota.
 Quid rotulae insistis? Stare loco nequeo.
 Quid talaria habes? Volucris sum; Mercurius quae
 Fortunare solet, trado ego, cum volui.
 Crine tegis faciem. Cognosci nolo. Sed, heus tu,
 Occipiti calvo es. Ne teneat fugiens.
 Quae tibi iuncta comes? Dicat tibi. Dic, rogo, quae sis?
 [...]
 Sum Dea, quae facti non factique exigo poenas:
 Nempe ut poeniteat; sic Metanoea vocor.
 Tu modo dic, quid agat tecum? Si quando volavi;
 Haec manet: hanc retinent quos ego praeterij.
 Tu quoque, dum rogitas, dum percontando moraris,
 Elapsam dices me tibi de manibus'.

15 Ibid. fol. ++2v.

and afterward imitated for the purpose of eternal salvation, would have been overly abundant'.¹⁶

The title-page brings to the fore the aspects of Occasion that David thought especially noteworthy [Fig. 14.4]. Gone are two of the pagan deity's identifying attributes: the knife that portends fickleness, contingency, and randomness, and the wheel that proclaims volatility, restlessness, and inconstancy. At left of the virtual epitaph she presents her gifts—a ciborium, rosary, and laurel garland—to the soldier grasping her by the hair and intently gazing at her shrouded face. At right she makes her escape from a neglectful tillerman who ignores the wind filling his sail and from an indolent husbandman asleep in his fields. The roundel, labeled 'Occasio temporis' ('Occasion of time'), above the vigilant soldier, depicts an army that has picked the perfect time to attack its bedazzled opponents; below, Jael prepares to strike the fatal blow, having wisely bided her time. Beneath this scene sits the personification of mercantile abundance, bowered with garlands, a bale and a barrel at her feet, a cornucopia in her arms; flanking her are fair winds and a column and obelisk that stand for the Western and Eastern borders of the known world. This allegory is inscribed 'Occasionis arreptae commoda' ('Benefits of occasion seized'). The roundel, labeled 'Occasio loci' ('Occasion of place'), above the fleeing figure of Occasion, depicts a garrison emerging from their fortified stronghold to put its enemies to flight; below, another garrison, behaving very differently, feasts, gambles, and dozes while their redoubt crumbles and the gateway to their citadel, with portcullis raised, remains unguarded. Beneath this scene, a remorseful penitent, his arms crossed, sits beneath a kind of gallows hung with shackles, while a distant devil beckons menacingly from the flames of hell. This exemplum is inscribed 'Misfortunes of occasion shirked' ('Incommoda neglectae [occasionis]'). At the top of the title-page, a roundel labeled 'Occasion of the matter at hand' ('Occasio rei'), and inscribed 'Strike while the iron is hot' ('Ferrum dum candet candendum est'), depicts two smiths forging a metal bar. Below appears the Herodotan antithesis to this proverbial epitome: the Psylli, a tribe of North Africa, having selected the wrong time, place, and course of action, attack Auster, the desert wind of the South, whose sandy blasts

16 Ibid.: 'ita tamen ut non per omnia Veterum vestigiis insistentum nobis existimaremus; sed ea tantum ex ipsorum descriptione sumeremus, quae praecipue in Occasione videbantur expendenda. Utpote quod rerum hic bene gerendarum, & salutis aeternae postea consequendae, copiam uberrimam faceret'.

annihilate them. The inscription reads: 'The Psylli muster arms against Auster whose sands overwhelm them'.¹⁷

The conjunction of this allegorical apparatus and the title proper, *Occasion Seized, Shirked, Commodious to Some, Incommodious to Others, by the Author, the Reverend Father Jan David, Priest of the Society of Jesus*, adverts to the dual significance of *Occasio*, who not only signifies opportunity, as bodied forth by the ancients and selectively appropriated by David, but also personifies David's book, which offers the vigilant reader-viewer the opportunity to assess his prospects as he journeys in this life toward (or away from) salvation. Seize the time and place, argues the title-page, to engage with the *res* of this book, the matter it adduces, for the matter to be forged in the smithy of these spiritual exercises is the reader-viewer himself, who must welcome, rather than avoiding, the occasion of doing good. Whereas the *Typus occasionis* was mainly aimed at young boys, presumably Jesuit collegians, the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*, as David declares at the close of the general preface, addresses every kind of person, urging them 'to behave fitly, according to condition and degree, lest they neglect the God-given occasion of doing what is right; and so, in this explanation of *Occasio*, it seemed appropriate to construe each of the pictorial *schemata* in such a way as to be useful to every single person'.¹⁸ In the "Occasio, drama", the emblematic *schemata*, and the commentary in twelve chapters, the five prudent and five imprudent youths stand proxy for every sort of reader-viewer, running the gamut from attentive to negligent, from virtuous to vicious. David analogizes them to the five wise and foolish virgins in *Matthew* 25, arguing that their purchase on the reader-viewer is no less clear than that of the parabolic figures on Christ's auditors: 'Just as in the Gospel parable sketched out by Christ the Lord under the form of ten virgins, every kind of man knows that he is being admonished to imitate the prudence of the wise virgins, lest with the foolish ones he be excluded from entry into the heavenly kingdom and be given up to the chains of eternal damnation, so here the five prudent youths who earnestly embrace what is offered to them by divine favor—namely, the grace of God, the help of the Guardian Angel, and the advantageousness of Time and Occasion—for the purpose of securing

17 'Psylli Austro arma movent, hos obruit Auster arenis'. On the Psylii, see Beloe W. (ed.—trans.), *Herodotus Translated from the Greek*, 4 vols. (New York: 1828) II 150.

18 David, "Praefatio ad lectorem", in *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* fol. ++3r: 'cuius hominum generi convenire quoque cognoscitur; ut videlicet pro suo quisque statu & gradu se probe gerat, Occasionemque sibi a Deo datam ad recte agendum non negligat; ideo in ista Occasionis explicatione, singula imaginum schemata ita visum fuit interpretari, ut unicuique mortalium usui esse possit'.

erudition, honor, and salvation, should exemplify to everyone the necessity of conducting themselves accordingly'.¹⁹

Point of Origin: The School Play "Occasio"

Let us turn now to the book's three parts, starting with the playscript, the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta's* putative point of origin. How does *prosopopoeia* function in this subsection? It is, first of all, presented as a theatrical artifice, an exercise in dramatic impersonation, to be enacted by the boys ('juvenes') for whom the play was written. The "Preliminary Summary" ("Periocha") that prefaces the drama makes this clear at the outset:

What the ancient sages said about Occasio, that the front of her is long-haired, but the back deprived of hair (that she may be assumed easy to grasp at the outset, but once having flown, returns not to her former condition, neither for price, nor prayer, or tears), all this the youths practice to bring forth in the Palladian theatre of combat.²⁰

Although David's general preface counsels us to see Tempus and Occasio as transparent to the ancient idols they adapt and transform, the playscript characterizes their identities, howsoever fictional, as relatively stable within the play's narrative trajectory. Second, the story they enact and the characters they externalize are patently religious. The "Periocha" disills the play's major events as follows: amiable Time comes forward and introduces himself, prompting Occasion to do the same and reveal her powers [Fig. 14.9]; a third protagonist,

19 Ibid.: 'Ut, quemadmodum in parabola Evangelica, a Christo Domino nobis sub decem Virginum typo adumbrata, omnes cuiusvis ordinis homines habent quo se certo sciant admonitos, ut quinque Sapientum prudentiam imitentur, nisi cum quinque fatuis ex ingressu Regni caelestis excludi velint, & damnationis aeternae vinculis mancipari; ita heic quinque prudentes adolescentes, Dei gratiam, Angeli tutelarum auxilium, et temporis Occasionisque opportunitatem, ad eruditionem, honorem, & salutem assequendam, sibi Dei munere oblata studiose amplectentes, omnibus sint exemplo, ut in suis quisque idem praestet'.

20 David, "Periocha", in "Occasio, drama", in *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* 277: 'Quae priscis memorata Sophis, viduata capillis Occiput, at frontem crinita Occasio (nempe Obvia prensari facilis, fugitiva regressum Nec prece, nec pretio, lacrymisque datura priorem) Hanc dare Palladia Iuvenes meditantur arena'.



FIGURE 14.9 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 1: Time and Occasion Expound their Gifts". Engraving. In Jan David, S.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605).

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Guardian Angel, quickens the wavering hearts of youth [Fig. 14.10]; he encourages them to accede to the divine will, true source of opportunity, by taking hold of Occasion [Fig. 14.13]; Satanic stratagems and frauds make a mockery of Time and Occasion, causing the former straightway to depart, and the latter fleetly to fly off [Figs. 14.11–12]; Occasion shows her favour to other votaries, less dilatory than their peers, who lead her by the hair and hand, and are given to enjoy her gifts [Figs. 14.14–15]; the Guardian Angel, mediator of life and grace, offers assistance, lest those who delayed to seize Occasion, suffer eternal hell-fire for their fault [Figs. 14.16–20]. It becomes immediately apparent that this is a story about the relation between divine will and human agency, which is challenged suitably to react when blessed by divine benefactions; whereas the pagan version of *Occasio* is as inexorable as the passage of time, David's Occasion, even after she decamps, may still be recalled by the repentant votary aided by his tutelary angel. Third, if the encounter between Time, Occasion, the Guardian Angel, and the youths constitutes an allegory about divine grace, its workings, and what we make of them, the play also operates as a meta-allegory about personification and how it is discerned. Within the playscript, the ability to read prosopopoeic character synthetically as the sum total of a persona's integral attributes stands warrant for the ability to respond to the occasion of grace both actively and productively. How this is so will become evident through a brief examination of the dramatic *schemata* 1, 3, and 5 [Figs. 14.9, 14.11, & 14.13].

Schema 1 concerns the advent of Time, Occasion, and the Guardian Angel, each of whom explains the blessings he or she bestows. Guardian Angel is the first to take the stage [Fig. 14.9]. He recounts the many battles he has waged as soldier of the Lord and reaffirms his commitment to shielding the human race from harm. He then calls upon the boys, none of whom has yet appeared, boldly to make themselves known to Tempus and Occasio, whom he now invokes, asking that they assist these neophytes to engage in the honorable activities initiated and sanctioned by divine favor. Time steps forward and identifies himself as the ambient element in and through which all created things subsist: the starry heavens and radiant sun; earth, sea, and the vast fabric of the world; and all life that temporarily endures before giving way to oblivion. The motion of time, on this account, is circular, for all things revolve from one state to another ('omnia sic rursus per me revoluta labascent').²¹ Time's scythe, hourglass, and armillary headdress can be seen as hallmarks of the tasks he has accomplished and continues to accomplish in the service of God, his creator, for whom he maintains life's ebb and flow.

21 Ibid. 280.



FIGURE 14.10 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 2: The Angel Calls to Virtue, the Devil Calls Away from It". Engraving. In Jan David, S.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY, CHICAGO.



FIGURE 14.11 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 3: Foolish [Boys], at the Instigation of Satan, Waste Time Shamefully". Engraving. In Jan David, S.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605).

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FIGURE 14.12 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 4: At the Demon's Urging, Occasion is Miserably Mocked". Engraving. In Jan David, S.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605).

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FIGURE 14.13 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 5: Prudent [Boys] Studiously Observe Time and Occasion". Engraving. In Jan David, S.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605).

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FIGURE 14.14 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 6: Eager [Boys] Embrace Occasion's Opportunities", Engraving. In Jan David, S.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY, CHICAGO.



FIGURE 14.15 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 7: While Time Slips Away, They Stay Occasion by the Hair of her Brow". Engraving. In Jan David, S.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605).

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FIGURE 14.16 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 8: Imprudent [Boys], Having Come to their Senses Too Late, Deplore their Folly". Engraving. In Jan David, S.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605).

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FIGURE 14.17 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 9: Having Slipped Away, Time and Occasion Are Pursued not Overtaken". Engraving. In Jan David, S.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605).

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FIGURE 14.18 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 10: How much Harm, How much Danger There Is in Neglecting Occasion". Engraving. In Jan David, S.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605).
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FIGURE 14.19 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 11: The Angel Wrests Away the Devil's Prey, Impelling Them to Repent". Engraving. In Jan David, S.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605).

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FIGURE 14.20 Theodoor Galle, "Schema 12: The Disparate Ends of Occasion Seized and Shirked". Engraving. In Jan David, S.J., *Occasio arrepta, neglecta. Huis commoda, illius incommoda* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretum: 1605). THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY, CHICAGO.

Time then marshals Occasion, whose origins and present condition he describes, gradually converting pagan myth into Christian allegory. She is, he asseverates, his 'true sister' who 'ever cleaves to him closely'.²² Inadvertently blinded by a harsh step-dame, she wears her hair brushed forward to veil her injured eyes. Time has led her here because Nature, Occasion's true mother, charged him ever to function as the light of her lost eyes and as her guide, lest overly fond of modesty, she remain housebound, dwelling in perpetual solitude. Finally, before ceding the floor to Occasion, he exhorts her to enumerate the many benefits she has the power to bestow: 'And you, faithful Occasion, knowing that for mortal men you were created, count up your benefits, and let anyone who owns to a love and zeal for salvation enjoy these favors; and if anyone has contemned you, let him in no wise conceal his fault, but justly be damned to Orcus'.²³ Occasion now speaks, affirming the crucial role she has played in the key events of sacred history. She secured a place in heaven for the good angels who embraced her, and, on the contrary, licensed the bad angels who despised her, to dwell in Dis and to build its fearsome palaces. She was there when Adam, having rejected her, committed the first sin, and, entwined by the serpent's coils, infected the human race. And she returned to restore this broken people when Christ, having been born, battled against death and took up arms against the enemy of humankind.²⁴

Moreover, she was present at the meeting of Cain and Abel, when, having abhorred her, the elder brother murdered the younger and affronted God; and also present when Abel, having duly erected altars of burned offering, was granted by God perpetually to be known as a just man. She tried hard to please the twins Jacob and Esau, offering equal gifts to both, but cherished by the former and spurned by the latter, she granted Jacob the upper hand, allowing him, as he matured, to gather the rich tribute of heaven and earth. Dear to the people of Abraham, she led them safely through the parted waters of the Red Sea, their enemy, inimical also to Occasion, having been vanquished. She benignly indulged Saul, prospering him while he ruled with a measured hand; but then, scorned by him, she raised David to kingly glory. And again, it was

22 Ibid.: 'Tempus. At, germana soror, Occasio, quae mihi semper / Fida latus cinxti, [comes ipse]'.
 23 Ibid.: 'Tempus. Tu interea tua commoda fida recense,
 Cognita quo fias mortalibus, hisque fruatur
 Quisquis avet, cuique ullus amor studiumve salutis
 Est propriae: nihil ut valeat praetexere culpae,
 Si te contemta meritum damnetur ad Orcum'.

24 The sequence of events *supra*, in *ibid.* 280–281.

she whom the Gentiles welcomed honorably when they kept the faith, holding fast to the gospel of the heavenly kingdom entrusted to them; conversely, it was she whom the wicked Jews, baffled by the eloquent word of life, drove out of Palestine. So too, Occasion finishes, towered cities, towns, and kingdoms that disdained her now lie fallen and ruined, whereas many obscure places, having loved her, find themselves brightly flourishing, their names risen to sidereal heights, above all praise.²⁵ This inventory of Occasion's noteworthy accomplishments conflates her with the grace of Christ, which is seen manifestly to operate in a series of covenantal types—Abel, Jacob, Moses, Saul, and David—whose scriptural commemoration, as paraphrased by Occasion, constitutes the chief evidence of the everlasting glory to be obtained when the grace of Occasion or, better, the occasion of grace is espoused and taken to heart.

The attributes briefly described, denominated, and expounded in *schema* 1 adumbrate what the pictorial *schema* will show in concrete detail—the victor's laurel, palm, and wreath, the globe of the solar, lunar, and sidereal firmament, the crown, book, purse, necklace (or rosary), scepter, ciborium, and crucifix topped by the Holy Spirit, along with the cornucopia hanging from her waist and the cross-like floral coronet atop her head. They signify, as the drama asserts, but neither fully explains nor justifies, the kinds and degrees of timely benefit that the Christians and proto-Christians itemized by Occasion have obtained, all of which are either tokens of salvation or, in the case of the Old Testament exempla, earnest for the salvation to come. David provides terms for all these gifts: they are, to cite but a few instances, the evidence of 'empire' ('imperium'), of 'kingly authority' ('regalia sceptrā'), of eternal memory ('per saecula nomen'), of starry fame ('fama super aethera'), of 'ample honor' ('decora ampla'), of celestial and terrestrial endowments ('caelique solique munere foecundo'), of gilded benefactions ('aurea dona'), of perpetual salvation ('sedibus superis'), and of future glory everlasting ('quondam vos gloria tollet Olympo').²⁶ Such gifts, as he takes pains to emphasize, may be won only by human agency; Occasion, working in concert with Time, merely advances the ready opportunity and supplies the eventual rewards: 'What more need I bring to mind? Whoever has refrained from mocking what I in myself offered at the world's beginning and still offer, and has captured and cherished me, keeping the commandments; he it is who gratified in his every wish procures for himself great honors. [...] O noble youths! [...] If following my lead you happily strive to labor, preserve my words with willing ears, and accept

25 This sequence of events *supra*, in *ibid.* 281–282.

26 *Ibid.* 279, 281–283.

my golden benefactions, then one day Olympian glory shall raise you heavenward'.²⁷

The five imprudent youths introduced in *schema* 3 show themselves incapable of hearing these words, accepting these benefits, or seizing the opportunities before them [Fig. 14.11]. Their incapacity is expressed not only by their failure properly to interpret the attributes carried by Time and Occasion, but even more, by their inability to recognize them as personifications. In this scenario, the youths double as analogues to the reader-viewer, their heedlessness a figurative analogy for the incapacity properly to decode the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*. What is it that these boys get wrong? Inattentive to the passage of time and unmindful of the opportunities it provides for self-reformation, Golphus, Britto, Pontanus, Morinus, and Oleander, for that is what David call them, mistakenly take Time and Occasion for mere strangers, adventitiously encountered. There is a great deal of humor and irony in this *schema*, for the two Devils (*Diaboli*) who converse with the boys, taking pleasure in their stupidity, recognize the personifications with seeming ease, and more than this, they call forth additional personifications: 'While pleasant Spring ("Ver") allows, let each man's Pleasure ("Voluptas") take him'.²⁸ The *Imprudentes*, on the other hand, construe Time's attributes as mere toys, and having taken no notice of Tempus, let alone of time's passing, they also ignore Occasion, for she stands behind Tempus, shielded by his wings. They are similarly oblivious to Guardian Angel, who stands even farther away, several paces behind Occasion. If they pay no attention to Time's attributes qua attributes, they intensely covet his novel appendages:

Golphus. What dignity in his face and eyes!

Britto. How graceful his brow! What country is it that produces such youths, winged, with shining brows?

27 Ibid. 282–283: 'Cetera quid memorem? Quicumque ab origine mundi

Hactenus oblatam non fastidivit, amico

Sed fovit captivam animo, mandata capessens;

Ille sibi, compos voti, decora ampla paravit.

[...]

Vos, ô praeclari iuvenes!

[...]

Sin me duce laeti

Attentatis opus; faciles mea dicta per aures

Demissa in pectus servatis, & aurea dona

Accipitis; quondam vos gloria tollet Olympo'.

28 Ibid. 285: 'Dum ver molle sinit, rapiat sua quemque voluptas'.

Morinus. If only God would add wings to my soles and shoulders; I would always be the first to wing my way to the goal-post. When wearied by the race, I would fly freely through the open air.

Britto. Then take off, my dear, cleave with winged soles the limpid air; and fly above the highest heads: then swiftly return. We too shall essay, with wings stitched from fly-flaps, to reach places steep and difficult.²⁹

Oleander, for his part, grabs Time's scythe, riding it like a hobby-horse, and Pontanus, enamored of Time's hour-glass, exclaims, 'This double-gourd glass, what means it? How strange! Tell me, pray, how to produce such tremulous water-bubbles; how with a hollow reed and light breaths of air do I send them flying, in a manner pleasing to boys?'.³⁰ In response, Britto hatches a clever scheme: he will challenge the stranger to a plethora of games—highwayman, hoops, dice, cards, quoits, ballgames, squares, trundling-hoops, ring dancing, leaping, foot-racing, and wrestling matches—and, when the gentleman's distracted, he'll steal his things, for so, he concludes, 'it may be permitted to beguile the time'.³¹ David puns on Time and time: Britto thinks he's simply whiling away the hours ('sic fallere tempus'), not realizing that it's Time itself ('Tempus') whom he's trying to trick. This is to say that he hasn't a clue how to manage his time, even when Time, embodied in *Tempus*, confronts him, and nor does he recognize that Time's possessions are this personification's inalienable attributes, rather than desirable baubles simply begging to be expropriated. His complete lack of discernment, compounded by ignorance—he is like a living tabula rasa of iconography—is summarized by Guardian as the fundamental condition of wayward and disregardful youth: 'O foolish youthful minds,

29 Ibid. 286: Golph. Quantus honos ori atque oculis! Britt. Quae gratia fronti!

Unde precor novus hospes adest? Quae patria tales

Producit iuvenes, alatos, fronte micantes?

Pont. Cernite, praepetibus talaria fulgida pennis.

Morin. Si plantisque humerisque mihi Deus adderet alas;

Semper ego ante omnes vellem contingere metam.

Quando fatigarer cursu, per aperta volarem.

Britt. Incipe, care, seca volucris liquidum aëra planta;

Et supra capita alta vola: mox inde revertē.

Nos quoque consutis tentabimus ardua flabris'.

30 Ibid.: 'Pont. Vitrea quid sibi vult geminata cucurbita? Papae!

Cedo precor: tremula hinc bullas educere lympa,

Et calamo diffilare leves sublime per auras,

Iucundum pueris'.

31 Ibid. 287: 'Brit. '[...] liceat sic fallere Tempus'.

o wanton inclinations, so to neglect Time in every great endeavor! Is it right to have wasted in shameless derision, whatever was given you for Wisdom's sake by an overly indulgent heaven, and the true honors conferred by Time?'.³²

David characterizes the Improvident (*Imprudentes*) as incapable of seeing the forest for the trees, so enraptured by appurtenances that they relegate the *personae* of Time and Occasion to the position of non-entities, treating them like mere placeholders for sought-after things rather than as symbolic personalities. The Provident (*Prudentes*), by contrast, appear visually acute and mentally discerning. Drusillus, Tornus, Storia, Mirandulus, and Darotistus have no trouble seeing Time and Occasion for what and who they are. In meeting them, Time frankly presents himself as a living image, a noble token ('nobile pignus'), which is to say, a prosopopoeic embodiment of the nature of time: 'Behold the noble token, Time; my true sister, Occasion, and I happily offer ourselves and all we possess as servants to you'.³³ For their part, the boys reveal themselves to be attentive and discriminating beholders [Fig. 14.13]:

Drusillus. [Occasio], present as a welcome guest.

Darotistus. Ah! How joyfully we do gaze at your shining eyes!

Storia. How greatly desired, Occasio, you come before our eyes!³⁴

Responsive to both Time and Occasion, they succeed in laying the foundations of their present and future salvation, guided by Guardian Angel and Time, whose instruction they willingly acknowledge:

Angelus. Welcome is their sincerity of spirit: their good-will pleases.

Tempus. And nor is their favor wasted on the unmindful; as hereafter they shall know, when it is given them to enjoy our reward.

Storia. Your presence, speech, and beauty gladden us.

32 Ibid.: 'Ang. O stultas iuvenum mentes, ô ludicra semper Ingenia in magnis, neglecto Tempore, rebus! Siccine ludibrio decuit trivisse protervo, Quod vobis nimium larga indulgentia caeli Ad Sophiam & veros donavit Tempus honores?'

33 Ibid. 290: 'Temp. En, nobile pignus Tempus ego, soror & germana Occasio, vestris Servitiis laeti offerimus nos nostraque'.

34 Ibid.: 'Drusill. Hospes gratus ades. Darot. Pro, quam tua lumina laeti Adspicimus! Storia. Quam tu nostris Occasio ocellis Exoptata venis!'

Mirandulus. Nor is it any labor.

Tornus. Nothing capable of serving and honoring you could justly trouble us.³⁵

It bears repeating that the playscript differs from the pictorial *schemata* in its treatment of Time and Occasion as personifications whose status as such is either prudently discerned or imprudently ignored. Indeed, the mistake the Imprudentes make is to construe them as mere persons, curious in appearance to be sure, but without any discernible prosopopoeic significance. In the *schemata*, on the contrary, the ontological status of Tempus and Occasio changes:³⁶ they appear to come alive, behaving more like actual *personae* than enacted *sinneken*s, and accordingly, their capacity both to act and be acted upon, and to inspire to action their fellow protagonists, the five wise and five foolish youths, intensifies.³⁷ Another shift occurs in the twelve chapters of commentary: the emphasis now falls not on prosopopoeic allegory—the identity of Time and Occasion as poetic fictions—but on their function as hermeneutic guides. Together with Angelus Tutelaris, they launch the process of *allegoresis* that then unfolds from start to finish of the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*: the youths are taught how to draw moral instruction from their past, present, and future lives, on the model of scriptural paragons whose exemplary lives are parsed exegetically. These biblical parallels become the basis for the self-reflexive

35 Ibid.: 'Ang. Gratus hic est animi candor: placet ista voluntas.
Temp. Quam nec in immemores favor hic se impenderit; olim,
Quando frui nostra dabitur mercede, scietis.
Stor. Nos vestra exhilarat praesentia, sermo, venustas.
Mirand. Nec labor est ullus. Torn. Nihil est quod iure molestet,
Quod vestro obsequio vel cedere possit honori'.

36 To distinguish between the *schemata*, play text, and commentary, I use Latin names (Occasio, Tempus, *et al.*) for the personifications in the former, English names (Occasion, Time, *et al.*) for their counterparts in the latter two subsections.

37 The *schemata*, in augmenting the persuasive force of *Tempus* and *Occasio*, fulfill one of the key requirements of prosopopoeic usage, as set out by Cyprien Soarez in his rhetorical textbook *De arte rhetorica libri tres, ex Aristotele, Cicerone, & Quintiliano praecipue deprompti* (Cologne, Apud Gosvinum Cholinum: 1591) 121: 'Sed magna quaedam vis eloquentiae desideratur. Falsa enim & incredibilia natura necesse est aut magis moveant, quia supra vera sunt; aut pro vanis accipiantur, quia vera non sunt' ('But [this figure] requires a great measure of eloquence. For it is necessary that things fictitious and incredible move us greatly, precisely because they are beyond reality, or else they will be construed as false, because they are not actual').

allegoria in factis (allegory of fact) that the Prudentes learn to discover (and the Imprudentes fail to detect) in their own lives.³⁸

From *Dramatis Personae* to *Picturae*: The Mimetic Elaboration of Fictional Entities

What then of the emblematic pictures [Figs. 14.9–20]? How do they inflect the form and function of the personifications enacted in the play as a theatrical artifice, an artifice consisting in the portrayal of various encounters between two sets of boys and Time, the sponsor of Occasion? The *picturae*, first and foremost, amplify and intensify the verbal images generated by the playscript, making them more substantial, legible, affective, and compelling. The figures and their attributes are rendered more tangible, in the manner of *evidentiae* and *illustrationes* (evidentiary or illustrative proofs), which invest a speech with concrete details having the power of persuasive demonstration.³⁹ Theatrical staging is replaced by spacious landscape settings, out of which the protagonists step forward, their bodily attitudes, gestures, and facial expressions made more specific and engaging. The action generally takes place at the threshold of the image, where the address to the viewer is heightened. Earth and sky, the terrestrial and the heavenly, are seen seamlessly to interact, the former brightly illuminating or densely shadowing the latter. These adjustments elide stage effects into persuasive pictorial fictions that operate hypostatically, evincing the spiritual and corporeal properties of Tempus and Occasio, as these are

38 On *allegoresis*, see Barney S.A., *Allegories of History, Allegories of Love* (Hamden, CT: 1979) 43–47; Quilligan M., *Milton's Spenser: The Politics of Reading* (Ithaca, NY: 1983) 29–32; Dyke C. van, *The Fiction of Truth: Structures of Meaning in Narrative and Dramatic Allegory* (Ithaca, NY: 1985) 44–45, 203; Guiderdoni A., “La polysémie des figures dans l’emblématique sacrée”, in Adams A. (ed.), *Emblems and Art History: Nine Essays* (Glasgow: 1996) 97–114; eadem, “De l’idole sensible à l’idole herméneutique: Figures du discours et idolatrie verbale”, in Watthee-Delmotte M. – Dekoninck R. (eds.), *L’idole dans l’imaginaire occidental* (Paris: 2005) 217–229; Hanning R.W., “No [One] Way to Treat a Text: Donaldson and the Criticism of Engagement”, *Chaucer Review* 41 (2007) 261–270; and Anderson J., *Reading the Allegorical Intertext: Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton* (New York: 2008) 419 n. 115.

39 On *evidentia*, *illustratio*, and their rhetorical function of concretely ‘proving’, see Quintilian’s *Institutes of Oratory* 9.2.40, <http://rhetoric.eserver.org/quintilian/9/chapter2.html>; Quintilian M.F., *Institutes of Oratory: or, Education of an Orator in Twelve Books*, ed.—trans. J.S. Watson, 2 vols. (London – New York: 1856) 1 163–164; and Bussels S., *The Animated Image: Roman Theory on Naturalism, Vividness, and Divine Power*, *Studien aus dem Warburg-Haus* 11 (Amsterdam – Leiden: 2013) 71–73.

experienced by the two cohorts of boys. The result is that the play's conceits are bodied forth as striking events, the vividness of which makes them seem less staged, if not virtually unmediated. The *schemata* are thus rendered more memorable to an attentive and impressionable reader-viewer, whose task it is to imprint these images upon his heart, where they may be further enlivened, meditated, and interrogated by his faculties of sense, mind, and spirit.

The mottos, taken from the play's chapter headings, and the dialogic epigrams, excerpted from the acts, attach firmly to the pictures, providing the emblematic armature that distills the nature of what is being performed, and converts the *schemata* into speaking likenesses. Take, for example, the motto to *schema* 1, 'Time and Occasion expound their gifts' [Fig. 14.9].⁴⁰ The reference to explication ('explicant') is threefold, since the verb *explicare* signifies 'to unfold', in the sense of expounding, but also 'to make something known or knowable', and last but not least, 'to display or reveal to view', in the sense of making something apprehensible or visually discernible. The epigrammatic inscription, on the other hand, not only designates who is who (Tempus is annotated 'A', Occasio 'B'), but also tells us what they say, giving them voices. Combined with the picture, the motto and the epigram reveal that Tempus and Occasio, in holding up their attributes, are making their identities visible and thereby knowable, in a speech-act comprised by the dual actions of self-exposition and self-offering. The term *munia* (gifts), is similarly multivalent, since it also signifies 'favors' and 'oblations'. Seen in this light, what is being presented—the hourglass and scythe, the laurel, book, celestial globe, etc.—and the act of presentation, are mutually significant, for the identifying attributes that Tempus and Occasio proffer are the gifts that allow them to demonstrate that they are giving themselves to us. In all these transactions, the picture proves paramount, in that its orientation toward the beholder insists on the fact that everything is contingent upon his response to what is exhibited.

In *schema* 5, the picture makes apparent that every inflection of the verb *observare* (observe), on which turns the motto, 'The prudent [youths] studiously observe Time and Occasion', is being explored [Fig. 14.13].⁴¹ The boys, their hats doffed, gaze intently at Tempus, and, in the case of boy H, at Occasio; boys D, E, and G genuflect, and the foremost boy takes Time's hand, as if preparing to kiss it. In addition, boy F places his hand upon his heart. The boys thus tease out the full range of meanings implicit in 'to observe', inflecting its various usages: closely to regard with the eyes; to pay great attention to; to honor

40 'Tempus et Occasio sua explicant munia'.

41 'Tempus et Occasionem prudentes studiose observant'.

or pay court to; to regard as authoritative; to abide by or adhere to in practice. By contrast with the boys in *schema* 3, who pay no regard to Tempus and Occasio, not even glancing at them, instead focusing their entire attention on the attributes they have playfully misappropriated, the boys in *schema* 5 demonstrate that observing these visitors involves seeing them *in toto*, recognizing them as persons, which is to say, as personifications whose attitudes, gestures, and especially countenances must first be scrutinized and deciphered, if their benefits are to be secured [Figs. 14.11 & 14.13]. *Schema* 3, on the contrary, shows how the covetous boys, in stripping Tempus of his feathers, scythe, armillary sphere, and hourglass, can be said to have stripped him of his very identity [Fig. 14.11]. Their failure to know Tempus and efforts to pilfer Tempus's assets, lead them improvidently to squander what little time they have, as the motto asserts: 'The foolish [youths], at the instigation of Satan, shamefully misspend Time in dissipation'.⁴²

Throughout the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*, David relies on placement within the pictures to clarify narrative details that lie beyond the scope of words. In *schema* 3, for instance, the distant position of Angelus Tutelariorum with his crossed arms and crossed staff, his eyes focussed heavenward, indicates how far the five imprudent youths have strayed from the action of divine grace. No letter accompanies the angel, which indicates in this context, as also in "Act 3", that he is both silent and unseen, out of sight and out of mind. In *schema* 5, the opposite occurs: Angelus Tutelariorum, now positioned in front of Tempus and Occasio, points toward God on high; his placement indicates that he mediates the encounter transpiring before him [Fig. 14.13]. It might be truer to state, however, that his commanding presence signifies that the boys are fulfilling the will of God, whose imperatives the angel transmits. By the same token, the secondary or, as here, tertiary position taken by Occasio in several of the *schemata* implies that her presence is mediated by that of Tempus and Angelus Tutelariorum. These distinctions are often very subtly drawn: in *schema* 1, for example, the approaching figure of Tempus stands one step closer than Occasio, and this registers his primacy, for her presence is a function of his, and it is he who introduces her, as the epigram and playscript corroborate [Fig. 14.9].

The *picturae* often include corollary details, again unmentioned in the texts, that play the part of amplifying ornaments. For instance, the scenes in heaven, unlettered with one exception (*schema* 12), emphasize that Tempus and Occasio, in their distinct yet complementary characters, functions, and effects, originate with God, who has established them as the preconditions of salvation history and the prerequisites of moral agency [Figs. 14.12, 14.13, 14.19, & 14.20]. This allusion to the necessity of Tempus and Occasio correlates

42 'Fatui instinctu Satanae turpiter Tempus terunt'.

to Tempus's description of himself, quoted in the epigram, as that ambient element without which no created thing could subsist, and to Occasio's description of herself, also quoted below, as an age-old being. In *schema* 1, God the Father points upward, as if at the words 'Tempus' and 'Occasio' in the motto, and his gesture of pointing is echoed by the ostensive gestures of Tempus and Occasio. Both figures are lit by natural light falling from the upper left, but also from above by celestial light that signals their divine point of origin.

The atmospheric effects, brilliantly rendered by Theodoor Galle, further embellish the *schemata* in ways that exceed David's verbal images, even while complementing them. In *schema* 3, the storm clouds that occlude the divine presence, like the cross carried by Angelus Tutelaris, the crucifix displayed by Occasio, and the signs of the cross made by Tempus and the angel, recall the darkness that covered the earth at Christ's death, as described in *Matthew* 27:45 and *Luke* 23:44, and prophesied in *Isaiah* 60:2 [Fig. 14.11]. This tacit analogy strengthens the implication that the boys' foolish games, howsoever amusing, constitute the occasion of mortal sin. The figure of God the Father in *schema* 5, hidden behind a cloudbank, much smaller and more distant than in *schema* 1, testifies to the distance between boyish aspiration and human salvation [Figs. 14.9 & 14.13]. The widening interval between heaven and earth signifies how far the boys must travel if they are to secure salvation, first by heeding the angel's call, then by using Tempus wisely and seizing Occasio. The garlands and victor's palms carried by the angels hovering above stand for the rewards to be bestowed in the future, at journey's end.

God speaks in none of the *schemata*, and nor does he speak anywhere else in the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*; the reason for this omission is that Tempus and Occasio, as sponsored by Angelus Tutelaris, are intended to function as the primary symbolic instruments through which the divine will is discerned. The pointing gesture of Angelus Tutelaris in *schema* 5, which doubles as a rhetorical gesture of positing, emphasizes that the personifications whom he ushers in are divinely sanctioned and angelically adduced. David thereby invites us to infer that the allied processes of reading these personifications and acting upon them are tantamount to the processes of ascertaining the will of God and conforming oneself to it. By the same token, the process of reading this book and its images is offered as a crucial spiritual exercise capable of bringing into focus the prospect of salvation. For the most part, the personifications' actions are circumscribed: they merely step forward or backward, and tender or withhold their favors, prompting provident or improvident reactions from the two sets of boys. The effect is to underscore the Roman Catholic doctrine of justification, codified in the Tridentine Decree of 13 January 1547, which states that salvation is achieved through a combination of human effort and

prevenient grace.⁴³ For David, who was surely conversant with this decree, Time and Occasion, by their very presence, supply the circumstances that facilitate virtuous action, but such action remains potential and hypothetical until it is respectively realized, or forestalled, by the five Prudentes and five Imprudentes, whose stories the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* recounts. That Tempus and Occasio are prosopopoeic embodiments, the visible and tangible expressions of otherwise intangible abstractions, brings to mind the allied doctrine that justifying grace operates both corporeally and spiritually, in the intangible registers of heart and mind, and the tangible register of body.

The pictorial status of Tempus and Occasio as former *dramatis personae*, who now emerge as full-fledged fictional entities, within a mimetic frame of reference more persuasive than the bounded world of a collegiate stage, brings to mind their similarity to the personifications in Maarten van Heemskerck's *Cycle of the Vicissitudes of Human Affairs*, engraved by Cornelis Cort and published by Hieronymus Cock in 1564 [Fig. 14.21].⁴⁴ Like Tempus and Occasio, these figures are presentational in mode, though the context is processional, and the mortal protagonists, rather than interacting with the personifications, are reduced to small background exempla. Again like Tempus and Occasio, these personifications originated as *dramatis personae*: they first appeared as *sinnemens* within the annual *ommeegang* (procession) of the Holy Circumcision,

43 In particular, see chapters 5 and 7 of the "Decree on Justification", on 'predisposing grace' and the crucial relation between faith and works: Tanner N.P., S.J. (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2 vols. (London – Washington, DC: 1990) II 672–674.

44 On this series, see Bieren de Haan J.C., *L'oeuvre gravé de Cornelis Cort, graveur hollandais 1533–1578* (The Hague: 1948) 213–214; Riggs T., *Hieronymus Cock: Printmaker and Publisher*, Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts (New York – London: 1977) no. 146; Veldman I.M., *Maarten van Heemskerck and Dutch Humanism in the Sixteenth Century* (Maarsse: 1977) 133–141; eadem, *Leerrijke reeksen van Maarten van Heemskerck* [exh. cat., Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem] (Haarlem: 1986) 47–57; Veldman I.M. – Luijten G. (eds.), *The New Hollstein: Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, 1450–1700—Maarten van Heemskerck* (Roosendaal: 1993–1994) 482–490; Bautz M., *Virtutes. Studien zu Funktion und Ikonographie der Tugenden im Mittelalter und im 16. Jahrhundert*, Premium 62 (Berlin: 1999) 131–133; Sellink M. – Leeflang H., *The New Hollstein: Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, 1450–1700—Cornelis Cort*, 3 vols. (Rotterdam: 2000) I 223–227; Veldman I.M. – Sabatier S. et al., *Heemskerck & l'humanisme, une oeuvre à penser, 1498–1576* [exh. cat. Musée de Beaux-Arts, Rennes] (Rennes: 2010) 59–63, 125–134; Vandommele J.J.M., *Als in een spiegel. Vrede, kennis en gemeenschap op het Antwerpse landjuweel van 1561*, Middeleeuwse studies en bronnen 132 (Hilversum: 2011) 126–132; and Buijs H., "Cycle of the Vicissitudes of Human Affairs", in Grieken J. van – Luijten G. – Stock J. van der (eds.), *Hieronymus Cock: The Renaissance in Print* [exh. cat., M—Museum Leuven; Fondation Custodia—Collection Frits Lugt, Paris] (New Haven – London: 2013) 204–209.



FIGURE 14.21 Cornelis Cort after Maarten van Heemskerck, *Triumph of the World*, from Cycle of the Vicissitudes of Human Affairs, 1564. Engraving, 220 × 295 mm. BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON.

staged by De Violieren (The Stock-Gillyflowers), Antwerp's foremost chamber of rhetoric, in 1561. For the print series, Van Heemskerck transformed them into self-sufficient entities, who exist in the world at large, and whose cyclical existence and influence on human affairs terminate only at the Last Judgment (plate 9 of the nine-part sequence), when all allegorical *verba* ('words') dissolve in the presence of the incontrovertible *factum* ('fact') of Christ's second coming.

The praise poem, "Prosopopoeia on the Occasion of Reverend Father Jan David", initialled J.D.C. and inserted at the start of the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*, reveals that the emblem book's personifications were appreciated differently from the impersonated *personae* of the playscript [Fig. 14.8].⁴⁵ The poem is titled

45 The initials J.D.C. probably stand for Jan David Cortoriacensis ('of Kortryk'), which would suggest that the poem itself is a doubled prosopopoeic exercise: David puts words into the mouth of a pseudonymous poet, through whom he addresses Occasion as if she were

“Prosopopoeia” because it apostrophizes *Occasio*, as if she were a person. The poet celebrates the prosopopoeic power of David’s ‘Daedalic pen’ (‘daedalaque penna’) to bring *Occasio* to life, comparing his ‘practiced hand’ (‘docto pollice’) to that of Mercury, who wields the caduceus, and those of Amphion and Orpheus, who play the lyre.⁴⁶ David has seized the occasion to produce this emblem book, and, having made the best of the resources at his disposal, he has succeeded in engendering *Occasio* as a living presence. Since the poet’s praise encompasses all of the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*, the ‘quill’ (‘penna’) he lauds as source of the book’s lifelike imagery has purchase not only on its texts but also on its pictures, that is, on both its verbally produced images and its pictorial ones. The reference to the legendary artisan Daedalus is another indication that David’s skill as a picturer, viz., inventor of the *schemata*, is at issue. The black ink from which issues the person of *Occasio* (and the book *Occasio*) must be construed as something other than a fleeting shadow cast upon the surface of the book’s white pages:

Live, *Occasio*, live;
 And may the usage of this inauspicious name not cause you burning
 blushes,
 As if [from it] nothing but perishable shadows were resounding.
 [Live] not by the lively wand of him who bears a herald’s staff,
 Nor by the lyre of Amphion or Orpheus,
 To which wild beasts and the restless shades hearkened:
 But by the practiced hand and Daedalic pen
 Of one more capable [than they], to wit, David;
 By a pen like an oarsman on the shining white surface of a quiet sea.⁴⁷

a living person; he thus displays his prosopopoeic power, seizing yet another occasion to bring *Occasio* to life and calling attention once again to the animating effect of his lively book. See *infra* for further discussion of this clever *figura sententiarum*.

46 David, “Ad Occasionem R.P. Ioannis David Prosopopoeia”, in *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* fol +5r.

47 Ibid.: ‘Vive *Occasio*, vive; inauspicati
 Nec te nominis huius urat omen,
 Ceu mere Occiduas sonet tenebras.
 Tandem, quod bene vertat, orta es Orbi.
 Non caduciferi excitata virga,
 Non Amphionis, Orpheive plectro,
 Quod ferae, & trepidi audiere manes:
 Davidis sed enim potentioris
 Docto pollice, daedalaque penna;
 Penna remige candidum per aequor’.

By picturing Occasion, enlivening her, David has seized the occasion of ensuring, for her sake and ours, that she make a lasting impression. With reference to the many attributes she displays in the *schemata*, he commends David for richly ornamenting her with tokens of the many benefits she holds in store:

This [pen] gives you light and will give it hereafter,
 Not that simple light [of the sun] easy to enjoy
 [...]
 But the glory of a loftier life,
 That produces eternal fame and fosters it.
 Inasmuch as [this pen] makes known to sight your riches, honors,
 Provisions stuffed full with nourishment,
 Sumptuous services of plate, rings [for the fingers], pendants [for the ears],
 And every kind of dazzling ornament.⁴⁸

In a further reference to the *schemata*, which expose Occasio's bald pate only once (in *schema* 9 showing the improvident boys' belated and futile attempts to seize her after Time has flown), the poet marvels at how beautiful she looks, with golden tresses rippling over her brow, her waist cinched by the *ceston* (girdle) of Venus and the Graces. And finally, imagining how she allows herself gently but firmly to be held by David's Habsburg dedicatees, Archduke Leopold, Bishop of Passau, and Archduke Charles, Canon of Passau and Salzburg, he circles back to his opening theme, David's exceptional gift for bringing virtuous opportunity to life. The action of personifying Occasion is analogized, on this account, to David's ability to occasion virtue. This analogy turns, of course, on the prior elision or, better, subsumption of lifelike image into living prototype, of mere semblance ('umbra') into *persona* ('Vive Occasio'):

48 Ibid.: 'Haec [penna] lucem tibi dat, dabitque porro
 Nec lucem modo simplicem fruisi,
 [...]
 Sed vitae decus eminentioris,
 Famam quae ciet ac fovet perennem.
 Quippe divitias tuas, honores,
 Penum commoditatibus refertam,
 Lautam Synthesin, anulos, inares,
 Et mundum omnibus explicat nitentem'.

[...] but you whom these [princes] have seized,
 They [now] gently bind, and you follow,
 Desiring to be held by so light a touch.
 This heroic semblance, if it is to revive you,
 (O semblance more enduring than the immortal shield of Minerva!)
 Then live, Occasio, live;
 Live, Occasio, live;
 And may the usage of this inauspicious name not cause you burning
 blushes, As if [from it] nothing but perishable shadows were
 resounding.⁴⁹

The image that heroically comes to life (*umbra*, 'semblance, shade, visual type') is implicitly contrasted to mere shadows that evanesce like echoes (*occiduas tenebras*, 'perishable shadows', i.e., 'shadows cast by the setting sun'). Since the initials J.D.C., as noted above, signify Joannes David Cortoriacensis ('of Kortrijk'), the poem epitomizes his book project in two senses: as an occasional poem written to mark the book's publication, it affirms that the author has indeed seized this occasion of bringing *Occasio* to life, converting her from a mere personification into a living persona; as an apostrophic poem addressed to the personification Occasion, whose emergent personhood is animated by the 'Daedala penna Davidis', it also constitutes a *mise en abîme*, replicating in small what the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* as a whole endeavors to effect. The pseudonymous poet invokes the prosopopoeic figure of Occasion precisely to demonstrate that she has been enlivened by the emblematiser Jan David, whose creative power is both represented within the poem and performatively enacted by it.

49 Ibid. fol. +5v: '[...] at hi prehensam
 Stringent molliter, & volens sequeris,
 Tali docta lacinia teneri.
 Haec te heroica si fovebit umbra,
 (Umbra ô aegide tutior Minervae!)
 Vive Occasio, vive; inauspicati
 Nec te nominis huius urat omen,
 Ceu mere Occiduas sonet tenebras'.

From Allegory to *Allegoresis*: Intensification of Figurative Interpretation in the Twelve Chapters of Commentary

How, finally, are personifications construed in the twelve chapters of commentary that take up most of the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*? Here the personifications become very tractable, their identities elastic. The dedicatory preface provides a good example of what I mean by 'tractable' and 'elastic'. It commences with a cluster of *paronomasiae* ('plays on words') that typify David's kaleidescopic handling of the nomenclature *occasio* throughout the commentary. He first distinguishes *occasio* from the pagan *fatum* ('inexorable fate', 'destiny'), professing his disinterest in the latter, which involved divining the will of the gods by means of obscure and esoteric auguries.⁵⁰ Predestination, he implies, is a heathen concept, whereas his book construes Occasion as a force amenable to human influence, whose workings are detectable not concealed and covert. This is why he has fashioned the image of Occasion we see before us, finely adorning her so that she may go forth publicly and search for a suitable patron: 'But inasmuch as I adorn Occasion with feminine ornaments, giving her form and finish as my poverty allows, so that she may launch herself publicly; so a certain good *Genius* presents himself to me and with his right hand tweaks my ear, saying, "This new opus on *Occasio* ought to be dedicated to their most serene highnesses, the Archdukes Leopold and Charles, who, after seeing the *Typus occasionis* earnestly urged [you] to produce a further volume, on the model of [your] *Veridicus Christianus*!"⁵¹ David personifies the impulse to dedicate this emblem book, which is itself personified as Occasion, who embodies the effort opportunely expended in writing the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*.

50 David, "Serenissimis ac reverendissimis Principibus, Domino D. Leopoldo, Episcopo Passaviensi [...] et Domino D. Carolo, Canonico Salisburgensi, et Passaviensi, etc. Archiducibus Austriae [...] Ioannes David Soc. Iesu sacerdos l. m. dedicat consecratque", in *ibid.* fol. +2r. David claims to eschew the divination of obscure *argumenta* ('signs, fictions, represented subjects'): 'Fatum! fatum! profanus hic quispiam Ethnicorum exclamet, Serenissimi Principes: At ego, numen nutumque divinum non obscuris hic argumentis agnosco'.

51 *Ibid.*: 'Dum siquidem Occasionem mundo muliebri adorno, ac pro mea tenuitate polio comoque, ut ne publico semper careat; deque patrono, ad quem se applicet, cogito; Genius quidam bonus adstare mihi visus est, qui dextram suaviter auriculam vellicans diceret; Opus hoc novum de Occasione, *Serenissimis* Leopoldo & Carolo *Archiducibus Austriae*, dicatum oportere: ut qui iampridem, conspectis Occasionis iconibus, aliquid, quod Veridici nostri formam aemularetur, a me desuper elaborari peroptarint'.

Here and elsewhere, Occasion the person resolves into *occasio*, the occasion, the circumstance of opportunity, grasped and exercised by the author, the fruits of whose labor, the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*, are then reembodyed as the personification Occasion: 'It is right that I rejoice in myself and my opportunity ["Occasioni meae mihique gratuler"], for I have attained by the benevolence of heaven, freely given, that which the lyric poet [Horace] desired with the utmost solicitude to obtain for himself and his work'.⁵² The reference is to Horace's *Epistle* 1.13.3, which describes his ongoing attempts to secure the patronage of Augustus. David, in offering up his book, imagines how, as a fully embodied person, it offers itself to Leopold and Charles: 'And so let *Occasio* advance under good auspices, and may she on that account rejoice in herself [...]. And let her not fear to relinquish her palm, when (most serene Princes) she enters the arena, for she desires to be seized and held captive, and considers herself to have conquered only when she is vanquished, triumphing in defeat'.⁵³

Heretofore linked with David, her identity now shifts as she attaches herself to new patrons, namely, Leopold and Charles, to such an extent that she and they become mirror images of one another. She functions as the occasion of their memorable deeds, triumphs, and sempiternal glory:

But truly, let her every faculty be placed at your disposal, for the purpose of accomplishing every kind of noble deed, winning every sort of honorable trophy, reaching the summit of eternal glory. But why do I say 'disposes'? Rather, is it not she, who shall marvel to find the image of herself in you, long before arriving before you. Augmented by great gladness, she shall surely step forward and contemplate her true self in you, speak sweetly with herself [through you], in the manner of Acco (that little old lady mentioned by Caelius Rhodiginus), who addressed the image of herself in a mirror! For what mirror shines more brightly than the example of lively Occasion held fast, than the great piety, the ancestral purity of religion, that radiate from the monument of yourselves, which

52 Ibid. fol. +3r: 'Est sane quod Occasioni meae mihique gratuler, ut qui spontanea Caeli benignitate hoc consecuti sumus, quod tanta solitudine Lyricus sibi suoque labori exoptabat'.

53 Ibid. fol. +3r-v: 'Eat itaque bonis avibus, sibique eapropter gratetur Occasio [...]. Neque est (Serenissimi Principes) quod illa, vobiscum in arenam descendens, palmam vereatur amittere; cum capi, teneri, stringique desideret; seque tum demum existimet vincere, cum vincitur, victaque vincitur'.

[piety and purity] you see attached like gemstones to the golden diadem of the Church?⁵⁴

Leopold and Charles, by their example, are seen to convert a prosopopoeic figure into incontrovertible *facta* that then redound upon a corollary figure, the personification *Ecclesia* ('Church'), in whose crown their achievements sparkle like precious stones. On this account, Occasion personifies their ability to transform fiction into fact, which is to say, that her action of seeing herself mirrored in them signifies theirs of converting opportunity into accomplishment. Acco (the inverse of Occa[sio]), the vain and self-deluded old lady whose true reflection, glimpsed in a crystalline glass, drove her mad, supplies the implied antithesis to Leopold and Charles, who tender themselves as true reflections of the fully realized occasion for achieving goodness and righteousness.

Before concluding, the dedicatory preface layers several more Habsburg identities onto the personification Occasion. It may be more accurate to say, in the case of Maria Anna of Bavaria, the Archdukes' mother, that Habsburg sanctity has the power to usurp the signifying functions of prosopopoeia, by replacing embodied abstraction with the particularity of a vivid exemplum. Maria Anna is said by her lively example to furnish the living occasion of the utmost piety ('vivis spirantem exemplis Occasionem praebebat'), for she prefers that her daughters become nuns rather than queens, and with them ministers to patients in the hospital she founded.⁵⁵ In bringing Occasion to life, she seems preemptively to erase the figurative potential of personification, which she supplants with the *facta* of her saintly deeds. The Archdukes' ancestor Ferdinand, on the other hand, restores some measure of autonomy to Occasion: when he founded, amplified, and ornamented the Jesuit College of Vienna, he seized bright Occasion ('praeclaram Occasionem'), shining a torch

54 Ibid. fols. +3v-+4r: 'verumetiam ad praeclara quaeque facinora, ad honoris trophaea, & gloriae sempiternae fastigium consequendum, omnem ipsius facultatem vestris usus Mancipate. Sed, quid dico, Mancipate? Nonne potius ipsa mirabitur, dum se tanto ante apud vos fuisse comperiet, quam advenit? Quantis vero laetitiis cumulata incedet, cum se ipsa in vobis verius contemplabitur, secumque suavius loquetur, quam olim Acco (illa apud Caelium anicula) suam in speculo imaginem compellat! Quod enim splendidius speculum, vivaeque & bene habitae Occasionis exemplum, quam eximia illa pietas, & avitae Religionis integritas, quae in illustri posita monumento sic radiant in vobis, ut gemmulas carbunculi agnoscas in aureo Ecclesiae diademate illigatas?'. On Acco, see Rhodiginus Ludovicus Caelius, *Lectio[n]um antiquarum libri xxx* (Lyons, Apud Sebastianum Honoratum: 1562) 457. He cites Plutarch's *De Stoicorum contrarietatibus* as his source.

55 Ibid. fol. +4r.

upon posterity.⁵⁶ Here the occasion of virtue jointly functions as the radiant person of Occasion, the one illuminating the other.

The commentary proper continues to explore the shifting character of Occasion, whose relationship with Time proves formative for both personifications. Their identities, as it turns out, are composite and interdependent. Chapter 1, titled “Exposition of *Schema* 1: How Time and Occasion Make their Gifts Known in the Image”, opens with a disclaimer about the nature of prosopopoeic definition [Fig. 14.7]. David has chosen to define Time not essentially but commonly, that is, according to the commonplaces by which it is generally known (‘communi modo loquendi’). His primary aim, after all, as he stresses, is to grasp the concept Time mentally (‘mente complecti’), in the manner of ordinary men, who discern the form and function of such abstractions by means of visual images (‘tam speciatim in hoc typo Temporis formam usumque in medium constituimus’).⁵⁷ David compares the image of Time in *schema* 1 to a guideline that secures one’s passage through a maze, and to a nearby skiff that guarantees a weary swimmer’s safety.⁵⁸ *Schemata* make difficult notions to some degree apprehensible, and, as a result, they allow us to engage with them interrogatively, on the example of Augustine, amongst other *auctoritates* (‘authorities’), who approaches God by way of questions rather than assertions. An inquisitive frame of mind also predisposes us to accede to the grace of divine revelation that has the power to illuminate the understanding, bringing to light such mysteries as the nature of Time.⁵⁹ The silent presence of God the Father in *schema* 1 (no scripted speech attaches to him), his arm held high in a rhetorical gesture of declamation that produces not words per se, but rather, the coronae irradiating Tempus and Occasio, signifies David’s conviction that these personifications body forth mysteries knowable, finally, only through the confluence of divine grace and human cognition.

The interval of space between God and Tempus becomes the basis, in David’s *explicatio* (‘exposition’), for the analogy he draws between spatial and temporal

56 Ibid.

57 David, “Schematis 1. explicatio”, in *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* 1.

58 Ibid. 2: ‘Verumtamen, animi gratia, quantum quasi ductu fili cuiusdam tuto licet, vestibulum saltem passibus aliquot tentemus; ut solent qui iuxta cymbam natant, in quam se vel periclitantes vel nando fessi recipiant; quandoquidem tam speciatim in hoc typo Temporis formam usumque in medium constituimus’.

59 Ibid.: ‘Nam & ipse, totis libris illius viginti duobus pluribusque capitibus, non semel, ut navarchus in altum devectus oceanum sidus intuens, ad benignam Dei opem recurrit, ut se queat extricare. Quaero (inquit) Pater; non affirmo. [...] Noli caludere, Domine Deus meus; bone Pater, per Christum obsecro; noli claudere desiderio meo ista, & usitata & abdita, quo minus in ea penetret, & dilucescant alucente misericordia tua, Domine’.

representation. Space is an abstraction known visually by reference to two or more things: it may be seen as the measure of distance separating them. So too, Time is known by reference to visible and representable things, as a property of their durative, simultaneous, or differential existence: '[...] we understand Time according to the common usage, whereby a thing is said generally to be of long or short duration, or to be coincident with some other thing, or temporally to differ from that thing'.⁶⁰ In this sense, Time, construed as something 'imaginable' ('*imaginariam*'), is called 'a certain interval of succession that moves or passes by, flowing steadily' amongst things.⁶¹ The movement of things operates within and as an index of this sequence of intervals: 'What we are talking about, then, is Time, or successive interval, that extends from the origin to the final end of the world. For in this interval, the occurrences of things come forth and [then] depart. [Time] is the measure of the duration and existence of all those things that mutually co-exist and shall continue to exist, from the world's beginning to its ending'.⁶² In *schema* 1, the forward motion of *Tempus*, his co-existence with *Occasio*, who comes forth beside and one step behind *Tempus*, and his reflexive relation to God in heaven, from whom earthbound *Tempus*'s pose and gestures clearly emanate, indicate that he transpires as a *mora successiva* ('sequential passage'), as the forward motion of all created things whose point of origin is God, the *Deus Artifex* (God the Artificer): 'For as much as God made the world, so with that selfsame creation fashioned by God, time came into being'.⁶³ The divine radiance that encompasses *Tempus* and *Occasio*, conveys how, as David puts it, the 'space of interval or duration is comprised by

60 Ibid. 4: '[...] accipimus illud vulgari modo, quo res aliqua vulgo dicitur longae aut brevis durationis, aut simul esse cum altera, vel ab ea tempore distare'.

61 Ibid.: 'Tempus autem est mora quaedam successiva, sive fluens, aut transiens aequabili fluxu'. David adds, by reference to Gregory of Nazianzus's *Oratio de Paschate* and Michael Psellus's commentary on this sermon, that just as space is abstracted from the perception of things, so interval is construed as something imaginary. It can be conceived as flowing from and to eternity: 'Et ut spatium hoc a rebus abstractum ac in immensum diffusum imaginarium vocatur, quod tale non sit in rebus [...] moram hanc vocant imaginariam: & concipi potest etiam ab aeterno fluere in aeternum'.

62 Ibid.: 'Hoc igitur tempus sive mora successiva, quae ab exordio mundi ad finem eiusdem extenditur, est ea de qua loquimur. In hac enim rerum gerendarum occasiones eveniunt, & labuntur: est enim mensura durationis & existentiae eorum omnium quae sibi coexistunt, aut ob origine mundi in finem existent'.

63 Ibid. 6: 'Mundum quippe fecit Deus, & sic cum ipsa creatura, quam Deus fecit, tempora esse coeperunt'.

the eternity of God';⁶⁴ on the other hand, their stepwise movements away, as it were, from the celestial sphere where God dwells timelessly, along with the subtle differentiation, again stepwise, in their relative positions, reveals that this space of interval or duration 'is properly denominated by the term Time, since it is measured, counted, and otherwise differentiated into discrete parts, even unto an instant or blink of the eye'.⁶⁵

David identifies Time's attributes as allusions to specific qualities made visible and measurable in and through the mutability of all matter, howsoever persistent or long-lived. His armillary headgear refers to the motion of the spheres, whereby the passage of Time is marked. His hourglass signifies the restless flow of Time; his winged ankles, Time's celerity; his capacity of flight, Time's quick passage from past to future, by way of the transient present; his scythe, the impermanence of temporal things, all of which he inevitably cuts down.⁶⁶ These are conventional attributes, codified in mythographic and allegorical handbooks, such as Lilio Gregorio Giraldi's *De deis gentium varia et multiplex historia* (*On the Varied and Diverse History of the Pagan Gods*) of 1548 and Vincenzo Cartari's *Imagini colla spozisione degli dei degli antichi* (*Images with Explication of the Ancient Gods*) of 1556, as well as in the illustrated editions of Andrea Alciati's *Emblematum libellus* (*Little Book of Emblems*), dating from 1531.⁶⁷ What makes them distinctive is their function of certifying that Time's transit, since it may be materially discerned, may also be pictured in the manner of the first *schema*: 'Now truly, I reckon that the reasons for portraying Time as he appears in this very image, have been made apparent to everyone'.⁶⁸

64 Ibid.: 'Nam, licet spatium hoc morae seu durationis, quod tempus appellamus, pars sit isti aeternitati (quoad Deum immobili, & semper eidem) inclusa'.

65 Ibid.: 'tamen, quia caelestium corporum motu mensuratur, computatur, aliove modo distinguitur, & in certas partes, usque ad momentum ictumque oculi, determinatur; temporis proprie nomine insignitur'.

66 David explicates these and other attributes of Time, in "Schematis I. Cap. 4: Quare Tempus ita describatur, ut in schemate depingitur", in *ibid.* 7–9.

67 See, for example, the description of *Saturnus temporis pater*, in Giraldi Lilio Gregorio, *De deis gentium varia et multiplex historia, in qua simul de eorum imaginibus & cognominibus agitur* (Basel, Per Ioannem Oporinum: 1548) 181, and, in the same book, on Saturn as the embodiment of Time, "Cur tempus esse fingatur", 37. Again on Saturn as Time, see Cartari Vincenzo, *Le imagini con la spositione de i dei de gliantichi* (Venice, Per Francesco Marcolini: 1556) fols. 10r–12r, and on Janus, who looks both to the future and the past, fols. 12v–14v. Also see the emblem "In Occasionem", which forms part of the subsection on "Fortuna", in Alciati Andrea, *Emblemata* (Lyons, Apud Gulielmum Rovillium, 1548) 100.

68 David, *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* 8: 'Iam vero, quare Tempus ita depingatur, ut in imagine ipsa videre est, notam puto omnibus rationem'.

David now turns to Occasion, showing how she is inextricably bound to Time. Since Time is finite, 'every opportunity it provides for attaining salvation must be seized' ('cuius usura & opportunitate id [aeternum] consequi datum sit').⁶⁹ Opportunity falls under the purview of Occasion, as he presently explains. Time's connection to Occasion becomes evident in David's assumption that the need to make every opportunity count constitutes a moral obligation. This is why David, as he avers, has diverged from the ancient poets, showing Time as a young man, rather than evoking Ovid's rapacious elder of days. The figures of Time and Occasion are to be appreciated as composite personifications, whose identities are commutable and mutually contingent:

It alone remains to justify our decision to have Time portrayed as a youth, when the ancients were wont to furnish an elderly man in his place. I shall tell it like it is. We gave thought not to what the Poet says about universal time—'Time who devours everything, and you envious old-age'—but instead to the presence of Opportune Time; as if by his lead he were bringing Occasion into view, she whom this treatise specially discusses. And so with such a face we offer for contemplation Time present, recent, fresh, and blooming, Time adapted to all things and to anyone's use. In which sense Plato speaks very clearly, for the purpose of weighing that part of Time which is conjoined to opportunity. Occasion, he says, is the vigor of Time, that to which Time conduces, that which combines [with Time] to produce some good.⁷⁰

If Time is adapted to Occasion, so also is Occasion adapted to Time. 'Vigorous, vernal, and lovely', continues David, 'Time commends to his presence Timely Opportunity ['idoneam [...] opportunitatem'], of whom every prudent person

69 Ibid.: 'Et propterea, quia tempus tunc non erit amplius, quis dubitet maximam temporis habendam rationem, ut cuius usura & opportunitate id consequi datum sit, quod est aeternum?.'

70 Ibid. 8–9: 'Restat nunc tantum, ut verbo explicemus, quare iuvenili aetate Tempus effingi curaverimus, cum Veteres senem virum soleant vice Temporis adornare. Dicam ut res est: Nos consideravimus, non quod dicit Poëta de tempore in universum; *Tempus edax rerum, tuque invidiosa vetustas*: sed praesentiam potius temporis opportuni; cuius quasi ductu coram sistatur Occasio; de qua potissimum in praesenti argumento disseritur. Tali siquidem vultu contemplandum praebeamus, quale est tempus dum praesens est, recens, novum, floridum; ad omnia, ad quae quis illo uti volet, accommodatissimum. Quo sensu praeclare Plato locutus est, partem illam temporis expendendo, quae opportunitatem coniunctam habet. Occasio, inquit, est temporis vigor, ad id quod conducit tempus, quod bonum aliquod cooperatur'.

should be mindful in himself and his affairs'.⁷¹ He cites the Greeks, who, unlike the Romans, provide a suitable precedent for his ostensibly novel personification. They felt compelled to depict Time as a youth because of his association with Occasion, whom in turn they were wont to equate with Opportune Time ('suo more tempus opportunum pro Deo fingeant'), giving him the form of a beautiful boy, his outstretched toes perched upon a rapidly turning wheel ('pulchrum iuvenem sive puerum formabant, summis pedum digitis rotulae volubili insistentem').⁷² The Greeks visualized the proverb, 'Know the time', viz., 'Make the best use of every opportunity', in this mixed guise: Opportune Time substitutes for mere Occasion, as the bringer of opportunity, on the authority of Plato himself.⁷³ So the Greeks are the ultimate source of the youthful, boyish figure of Time, and it is also they who first associated Time and Occasion, making their characteristics fungible. If Time, on this account, ushers in Occasion, he does so in the likeness of Opportune Time; and the figure he introduces is Timely Opportunity.

However, just as David's Time differs from Ovid's, so too does David's Occasion diverge from the Greeks'. For one thing, she is female; for another, her pose and gestures precisely mimic those of Time, from whom she emanates, just as Time's mimic those of his heavenly source, God the Father. Why, we might ask, did David distinguish his personifications in these ways? The answer lies in the audience he purports mainly to address and whose attention he endeavors to hold, so that having taken up the *Occasio*, they seize the occasion it offers to appraise and reform themselves, and learn to respond more attentively to Time and Occasion. Youthful Time is designed to appeal to David's youthful reader-viewers, Jesuit collegians, whose age he mirrors: 'I ought not to deny that I was likewise moved by the fact that a [youthful] appearance would be more suited and pleasing to the youths (whom my images chiefly address), than Cicero's age-old Saturn, who is shown devouring his children because time consumes all temporal things'.⁷⁴ More importantly,

71 Ibid. 9: 'Tempus itaque quasi virens, vernum, & vegetum, quale expressum cernitur, idoneam suae praesentiae opportunitatem commendat, quam prudens quisque debeat in se rebusque suis observare'.

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid.: 'iuxta illud celebratum Pittaci (unius e septem Graeciae sapientibus) dictum, γῶθι χαίρον, Nosce tempus. Ac si doceat, Noveris distinguere, aestimare, & captare, rerum gerendarum tempestivitatem, eamque cordi habeto'.

74 Ibid. 9: 'Movit me quoque, ne diffitear, quod iuvenibus (quibus Icones primum deductae fuerunt) aptior gratiorque illa forma futura esset, quam senis, & nescio cuius (iuxta Ciceronem) futuri annis Saturni; qui, quod tempus tempore nata consumeret, ipse ex se natos devorare fingeatur'.

Time and Occasion were intended to function within the formative spiritual exercises of which the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* largely consists. They differ for this reason from the pagan personifications whence they derive, even while conforming, in Time's case, to the Aristotelian distinction between time, which belongs exclusively to God, and opportune time, which belongs exclusively to humankind; the latter can nowise be serviceable to God who commands time and yet exists outside it ('Deo enim sunt tempora, non autem tempus opportunum [...] quod nihil Deo utile').⁷⁵ This is surely why Time, viz., Opportune Time, addresses the beholder so emphatically, and why he is accompanied by Occasion, viz., Timely Occasion, whose complementary attitude indicates that she is his close counterpart. Like her Greek predecessor, she is fleet-footed; she propels herself on the balls and heels of her feet, moving briskly forward, drapery fluttering in her wake.⁷⁶ Unlike him, she stands with Time, at our level, and insistently offers her gifts, placing them within the viewer's reach.⁷⁷

75 "Schemat. I. Cap. 5. Cur Occasio ita depingatur, & quare ipsi Tempus ceu dux vel comes detur", in *ibid.* 11. David formulates an implied syllogism in which *Deus* and *Tempus* function as analogues, as is evident from the statement that prefaces his observation about the aloof relation of God to the passage of Time: 'Tempora non sunt tempus opportunum'.

76 *Ibid.*: 'Est Occasio praeceps'. This apothegm, says David, derives from the aphorism of Hippocrates: 'quia materia circa quam versatur ars (medicina nimirum) continue fluit'.

77 David's point of reference here is exegetical, both generally and specifically. The relative stability, generosity, and availability of his Occasion are allusions to the supreme mercy of Christ, who, in establishing the Church, occasioned the salvation of humankind and answered Jewish ingratitude by converting the Gentiles into 'true Jews'. Underlying this scriptural reading of Occasion is *Romans* 2:14–17; 2:26–29. See "Cur Occasio ita depingatur", in *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* 11: 'Nos siquidem, qui ex gentilibus oriundi sumus, Iudaei veri facti sumus, secundum spiritum; nempe Christiani'. In particular, as David further explains by quoting *Isaiah* 49:8, 'Thus saith the Lord: In an acceptable time I have heard thee, and in the day of salvation I have helped thee', Time and Occasion are seen to step forward and offer their benefactions in accordance with the fulfillment of this prophecy in Christ. They are also to be seen as coming forward toward us in the manner of true Christians, as described by Paul in *Hebrews* 12:12–15, which David quotes *in toto*; see "Schemat. I. Cap. 6: Gratiae divinae praesidium Tempori & Occaioni coniunctum", in *ibid.* 12: 'Et quo apertius videamus, occasionem temporis gratiae, ut opportunam salutem, curae nobis esse debere; subdit: *Ait enim* (Deus scilicet per Prophetam Isaiam) *Tempore accepto exaudivi te, & in die salutis adiuvi te. Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile, ecce nunc dies salutis. Propter quod* (inquit alibi) *remissas manus & soluta genua erigite; & gressus rectos facite pedibus vestris: ut non claudicans quis erret, magis autem sanetur. Pacem sequimini cum omnibus, & sanctimoniam; sine qua nemo videbit Deum: contemplantes, ne quis desit gratia Dei*'. In all twelve chapters of commentary, the prosopopoeic personages, as represented in the *picturae*, are transformed into exegetical instruments whose actions and attributes, if properly discerned, become hermeneutic 'keys' having the power to effect a

The objects Occasion proffers are 'insignia' ('indices') of the rich rewards obtainable through the practice of human *artes* ('arts'), both material and spiritual. These *artes*, as David warns, quoting Galen, will prove transitory to the extent that they involve material things ('quia materia circa quam versatur ars [...] continue fluit');⁷⁸ but if properly handled, their effects will be long-lasting, and accordingly, these effects deserve to be situated on a spectrum leading by stages from earthly to heavenly benefits:

What she is seen to carry in her left and right hands, namely, the indices of every delightful and desirable thing, instruct us that through Occasion true honor and glory may be obtained, and also riches, the palm of victory, the goodness of olive-bearing peace, erudition, a cornucopian abundance of all things, the grace of the Holy Spirit, true salvation in Christ Jesus; and at last, the kingdom of heaven, fit to be earned, is set opportunely before our eyes, as something furnished to us, if only we be pleased to move our lips and, humanely, as is appropriate, to grasp Occasion and use her well.⁷⁹

Amongst the objects she holds, Occasion carries the crucifix, insignium of salvation, higher than the adjacent attributes, in line with David's ranking of benefits.

David also makes clear, by means of a counter-example, what sort of timely occasion he had most in mind when devising Time and Occasion. It is incumbent upon us, he insists, to take advantage of Opportune Time, to grab hold of Timely Opportunity, by engaging exegetically and meditatively with the whole of Scripture, the God-given repository of evangelical grace. Available to all who inhabit the present time, the occasion of grace is seized when one considers

moral understanding of Scripture and its application to daily life. It is worth noting that David's frequent references to his Christian refashioning of ancient personifications reenacts the process of typological exegesis, which views figural types through the lens of the antitypes that fulfill them. See *infra* for a fuller discussion of the shift from personification allegory to exegetical *allegoresis* in the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*.

78 "Cur Occasio ita depingatur", in *ibid.* 11.

79 *Ibid.* 10–11: 'Quae dextra laevaue confertim gestare conspicitur, omnium videlicet delectabilium desiderabiliumque insignia, docent, per occasionem obtineri posse verum honorem & gloriam, divitias, victoriae palmam, pacis oliviferae bonum, eruditionem, rerum omnium quasi cornucopiae affluentiam, gratiam Spiritus sancti, salutem veram in Christo Iesu; & demum, tam opportune nobis in hac vita regnum caeleste proponi promerendum, atque si propinetur, modo lubeat labris admove, & occasionem qua par est humanitate excipere, eaque bene uti'.

how the spirit of Christ spoke through the prophets, foretelling his Passion and future glory, and thereby signifying the salvation of humankind ('in quod vel quale tempus, significaret in eis spiritus Christi').⁸⁰ If Time and Occasion sanction a hermeneutic of scriptural unfolding, they are themselves scripturally sanctioned, as David verifies by conflating and paraphrasing *Acts* 13:46–47, *Romans* 2:13–29, and *Romans* 11:16–24, in defence of his composite method of personification:

And so truly it is permitted to say that in the time of Grace and the Gospel, by the occasion of Jewish ingratitude, the Gentiles procured the occasion of salvation in Christ; and that the olive tree's broken and severed branches occasioned the grafting of the branch of wild olive into the good olive tree. For we the descendants of the Gentiles, have been fashioned into true Jewry, according to the Spirit, which is to say, into Christians. But this has come to pass in the time divinely and specifically designated as opportune.⁸¹

80 David is quoting 1 *Peter* 1:10–13 to make the case that his reading of *Tempus* and *Occasio* is both exegetical and scripturally sanctioned. See "Gratiae divinae praesidium Tempori & Occasioni coinunctum", in *ibid.* 12–13: "Tempus gratiae nobis [...] opportunissime a Deo fuisse attributum, in D. Petri quoque verbis, ut in speculo videre est. [...] *De qua salute exquisierunt atque scrutati sunt Prophetae, qui de futura in vobis gratia prophetaverunt: scrutantes, in quod vel quale tempus, significaret in eis spiritus Christi: praeunciando eas quae in Christo sunt passionibus & posteriores glorias: quibus revelatum est; quia non sibi-metipsis, vobis autem ministrabant ea, quae nunc nuntiata sunt vobis, per eos qui evangelizaverunt vobis, Spiritus sancto misso de caelo, in quem desiderant angeli prospicere. Propter quod succincti lumbos mentis vestrae, sperate in eam quae offertur vobis gratiam*". Seen in this light, David's redacted *Tempus* and *Occasio* body forth Peter's injunction to seize the God-given occasion of engaging profitably with Scripture, the exegetical unfolding of which secures the revelation of Christ: 'Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and diligently searched, who prophesied of the grace to come in you. Searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ in them did signify: when it foretold those sufferings that are in Christ, and the glories that should follow: To whom it was revealed, that not to themselves, but to you they ministered those things which are now declared to you by them that have preached the gospel to you, the Holy Ghost being sent down from heaven, on whom the angels desire to look. Wherefore having the loins of your mind girt up, being sober, trust perfectly in the grace which is offered you in the revelation of Jesus Christ'.

81 "Cur Occasio ita depingatur", in *ibid.* 11: "Et vere ita dicere liceat, quod per tempus Gratiae & Evangelij, occasione ingritudinis Iudaeorum, gentes occasionem salutis in Christo repperint: quodque occasione confractionis & excisionis ramorum olivae, rami naturalis oleastri in bonam olivam sint inserti. Nos siquidem, qui ex gentilibus oriundi sumus,

In this formulation, the *time* of grace is seen *opportunately* to accommodate the dual occasion of belief and of disbelief, and to sponsor the *timely occasion* of conversion through a spiritual process of ingrafting. It is as if Opportune Time and Timely Opportunity were being seen to operate conjointly in Scripture itself, as prosopopoeic messengers of the spirit of Christ; or, put another way, as if the mutual ingrafting of Time and Occasion were being licensed figuratively by the scriptural imagery of the conjoined olive branch and tree. And finally, the mutual merger of Time and Occasion can be regarded as a trope for, as well as being troped by, the composition of discrete scriptural passages into a convergent exegetical argument.

Conclusion

The three registers of the *Occasio arrepta, neglecta*—propaedeutic play, emblematic *schemata*, and exploratory commentary—constitute three stages in the reader-viewer's engagement with David's spiritual exercises [Figs. 14.6, 14.7, & 14.9–20]: the play's artifice supplies their point of origin; the *schemata* convert this artifice into a persuasive, continuous, and autonomous narrative fiction, that more fully enfolds the reader-viewer; finally, the commentary deepens his understanding of the meditative program he has undertaken, assisting him to reflect upon the complex, mutually contingent nature of Time and Occasion as God-given benefactions to be seized, not neglected. The simultaneous presence of these three parts enables him reflexively to consider the process of meditation, helping him to parse its kinds and degrees, as he moves from his initial encounter with prosopopoeic allegory toward a fuller engagement with scriptural hermeneutics. He begins with personification and ends by more fully embracing *allegoresis* as a method of figurative interpretation.

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Double Meaning of Personification in Early Modern Thesis Prints of the Southern Low Countries: Between Noetic and Encomiastic Representation

Gwendoline de Mûelenaere

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the public defense of academic theses entailed the publication of a written presentation of the aspirant's conclusions. They were printed in the form of broadsides or booklets decorated with coats of arms, portraits and other ornaments, and were posted at the entrance of college halls or distributed to the audience. Thesis prints were mostly used as invitations to the disputation, but also offered visual support during the defense proper. During the seventeenth century, these paratextual devices developed into increasingly complex images filling the entire broadsheet. They were intended to praise the applicants' protectors, who were generally scholarly, religious or political personalities. In the Spanish Low Countries,¹ thesis engravings were mainly produced for students attending the universities in Louvain and Douai, or the Jesuit colleges established in these cities. In particular, numerous frontispieces or posters were realized within the context of the Jesuit school of mathematics, alternately based in Antwerp and Louvain between 1617 and 1690.²

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- 1 Thesis prints were regularly produced in France, Italy, Germany and Austria as well. See Appuhn-Radtke S., *Das Thesenblatt im Hochbarock: Studien zu einer graphischen Gattung am Beispiel der Werke Bartholomäus Kilians* (Weissenhorn: 1988); Meyer V., *L'illustration des thèses à Paris dans la seconde moitié du XVII^e siècle: peintres, graveurs, éditeurs*, Commission des travaux historiques de la ville de Paris (Paris: 2002); and Rice L., "Jesuit Thesis Prints and the Festive Academic Defence at the Collegio Romano", in O' Malley J. et al. (eds.), *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts 1540–1773* (Toronto: 1999) 148–169.
 - 2 On the teaching of mathematics in the Southern Netherlands, see Bruycker A. De, "En todo amar y servir a su divina majestad". Wiskunde in de opleiding en het onderwijs van de Vlaamse jezuïeten. Een cultuurhistorische benadering", *Scientiarum Historia* 32 (2006) 37–58; Meskens A., "The Jesuit Mathematics School in Antwerp in the Early Seventeenth Century", *The Seventeenth Century* 12,1 (1997) 11–22; Vanpaemel G., "Jesuit Mathematicians, Military Architecture and the Transmission of Technical Knowledge", in Faesen R. – Kenis L. (eds.), *The Jesuits of the Low Countries: Identity and Impact (1540–1773)*, Bibliotheca ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium (Louvain – Paris: 2012) 109–128; and Vijver O. van de, "L'école

The main composition usually displays mythological, historical and/or religious scenes, or a staging of the dedicatory presentation itself. When the representation depicts the student offering his conclusions to a patron, it constitutes a visual *mise en abyme* of the defense. This self-reflexive structure contains a double meaning: signs are used to say *something else* than what they say or show at first sight. Other iconic systems—the symbolic and the allegorical—are thus brought into play in thesis images that express the overabundance of the signified in relation to a single signifier.³ From the start, academic broadsides were regularly populated with personifications of Science, the Liberal Arts, Virtues, Wisdom, War and Peace, towns or countries, etc., which served to highlight key individuals, their heraldic devices and the accompanying texts. In thesis prints produced in the Southern Low Countries, these figures simultaneously play a cognitive and a laudatory role.

Disseminating Knowledge and Promoting Patronage: The Tradition of Thesis Prints

Personifications 'operate in the physical world of senses by representing abstract ideas in embodied form', usually in feminine guise.⁴ Allegorical discourse is by nature ambiguous, offering plural possibilities of interpretation rather than a simple route whereby words may be translated into images or, conversely, images into words. As a consequence, allegorical language is neither processual in a conventional sense nor merely decorative, but rather, represents complex processes or, better, programs of thought related to a patron, a ceremony, or a social, political, philosophic or moral discourse.⁵ Baskins and Rosenthal, in their edited volume *Early Modern Visual Allegory*, emphasize 'the inherent tension between fixed, conventionalized readings and the ever-present potential to shape meaning according to contingent, localized practices or events'.⁶ With regard to thesis prints, these meanings were created in

de mathématiques des Jésuites de la province flandro-belge au XVII^e siècle", *Archivum historicum Societatis Iesu* 49 (1980) 265–278.

3 Dällenbach L., *Le récit spéculaire. Essai sur la mise en abyme*, Poétique (Paris: 1977) 62.

4 Baskins C. – Rosenthal L., *Early Modern Visual Allegory: Embodying Meaning* (Aldershot: 2007) 1.

5 Fenech Kroke A., *Giorgio Vasari: la fabrique de l'allégorie. Culture et fonction de la personification au Cinquecento*, Biblioteca dell'Archivum Romanicum, Serie 1: Storia, Letteratura, Paleografia 380 (Florence: 2011) xiv, 2–3.

6 Baskins – Rosenthal, *Early Modern Visual Allegory* 6.

the performative context of defenses, academic solemnities designed to display the intellectual accomplishments of the disputants. Ornamentation and pageantry developed for the occasion included music, poetry and decoration of the college hall. These accoutrements transformed the disputations into total spectacles that made a deep impression on their audiences. Therefore, the original festive context around this graphic material needs to be considered if one is to understand the full scope of prints' functions, as well as their impactful reception. However, the broader artistic program in which the prints participated is often difficult to reconstruct since so much of the ephemeral apparatus has disappeared.

It is important to stress that thesis images were original works of art specifically made for the promotion of candidates, rather than adapted from existing models. The personifications displayed in these prints were vehicles for scientific reflection complementary to the political stakes underlying academic discourse. For that matter, these figures filled two primary functions. On the one hand, they embodied the main scientific and philosophical subjects taught at the Faculty of Arts: Logic, Physics and Metaphysics.⁷ The personification of Philosophy seldom appeared as such in the images, as the field was compositely formed from the conjunction of several disciplines.⁸ To cite one example, the humanistic disciplines are depicted in a composition designed by Erasmus Quellinus and engraved by Richard Collin [Fig. 15.1]. The thesis print contains the positions that Philippe Leerse defended at the University of Louvain in 1674, during a disputation chaired by Jean Lacman of Tournai. The student dedicated his thesis to Macaire Simeomo, Abbot of St. Michael in Antwerp. Personifications of Logic, Physics and Metaphysics, joined by an angel representing Ethics, surround the candidate. The latter bows respectfully and holds a large sheet of paper inscribed with the dedication. The allegorical figures present to the enthroned abbot the thesis conclusions inscribed on four medallions. They introduce the applicant to his patron, serving as intermediaries between the giver of the address and its recipient. Such staging valorizes

7 Law, Medicine and Theology, the three higher faculties at university, were less often depicted in the form of personifications.

8 Meyer V., "La représentation de la philosophie dans les frontispices de thèses en France au XVII^e siècle", in Cousinié F. (ed.), *L'artiste et le philosophe. L'histoire de l'art à l'épreuve de la philosophie au XVII^e siècle*, Aesthetica (Rennes: 2011) 229–249. Thesis prints generally represent Philosophy in one of three ways: via allusion to the different disciplines comprised by the field of philosophy; as exemplified by the patron saint of philosophers, Catherine of Alexandria; or as bodied forth by the figure of Philosophy herself, often joined by Wisdom, Theology or Religion.



FIGURE 15.1 *Richard Collin after Erasmus Quellinus, Philippe Leerse Presents his Philosophy Thesis to M. Simeomo, University of Louvain (1674). Engraving, 41.2 × 60.7 cm. Brussels, National Archives of Belgium.*

IMAGE © NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF BELGIUM (I 264–1700).

the laureate, publicly validating his position among the social elite, by stressing his intellectual merits and oratorical skill.⁹ On the other hand, personifications were used to body forth the virtues associated with a praiseworthy dedicatee—for instance Prudence, Justice or Faith. To sum up, such allegorical instruments could play two roles in thesis broadsheets. First, they were noetic images, and accordingly, served to transmit knowledge; secondly, they were encomiastic, and as such, facilitated the socio-political function of the dedication to a worthy patron. Furthermore, thesis prints should be situated within the framework of the Catholic ‘reconquest of minds’, particularly in Jesuit circles, which greatly encouraged the production of illustrated broadsheets.

9 Rice L., “Matthaeus Greuter and the Conclusion Industry in Seventeenth-Century Rome”, in Leuschner E. (ed.), *Ein privilegiertes Medium und die Bildkulturen Europas. Deutsche, französische und niederländische Kupferstecher und Graphikverleger in Rom von 1590 bis 1630*, *Römische Studien der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 32 (Munich: 2012) 221.

These two aims should by no means be considered separately. Personifications pertaining to knowledge are connected to embodiments of patronage by combining the eagerness to learn with the act of dedication of the thesis. This practice, consisting in giving a scientific, literary or artistic work to someone in order to pay homage to him,¹⁰ was meant to attract protectors' attention in the hope of reaping some benefits in the future. The dedication epitomizes the relation of patronage (existing or wanted) between an author or artist and his sponsor, and durably governed the production and circulation of works in the early modern period.¹¹ Both types of personifications jointly operate in thesis engravings, often signifying a double meaning: rather than applying allegorical language in a vested or lexical way, thesis print iconography was designed both to propagate knowledge and cultivate patronage. With specific reference to personification, I would now like to present three case studies of this dual mode of operation.

Embodying Science and Virtue in the Habsburg Netherlands

The first instance of personification endowed with a dual signification can be found in a thesis defended in 1645 by Johannes Michael and Ferdinand Morel, two brothers of noble origin [Fig. 15.2]. The broadsheet designed by Abraham van Diepenbeeck and engraved by Michel Natalis is dedicated to Ferdinand III (1608–1657). The King of Hungary and Bohemia and Holy Roman Emperor stands on a pedestal against which Justice (*Justitia*) leans. He is referred to as 'defender of Justice in war and peace [time]' ('*Bello et Pace Iustitiae defensori*'), while other Latin captions strengthen the references to justice and equity: 'to the Austrians, Justice' ('*Austriacis Iustitia*') below; 'there is a single rule' ('*Una est regula*') on the coat of arms of Austria; 'he [Ferdinand III] sees both of them [war and peace] through his shafts of light directly shining' ('*Radiis videt utraque rectis*')¹² above the Emperor; and 'it is just' ('*Iustum est*'), between *Justitia* and her attribute, scales. This theme is intensified by the presence of

10 Furetière A., *Dictionnaire universel, contenant généralement tous les mots françois tant vieux que modernes, et les termes de toutes les sciences et des arts* (The Hague, A. and R. Leers: 1690) 583: 'Dédier signifie offrir un livre à quelqu'un pour lui faire honneur, et avoir l'occasion de faire son éloge, et souvent pour en espérer vainement quelque récompense'.

11 Chartier R., "Patronage et dédicace", in *Culture écrite et société: l'ordre des livres (XIV^e–XVIII^e siècles)* (Paris: 1996) 81–106.

12 Reference to the sun's rays, symbols of divine justice.



FIGURE 15.2 *Michel Natalis after Abraham van Diepenbeeck, De iure belli et pacis theses, defended by Johannes Michael and Ferdinand Morel, University of Louvain (1645). Engraving, 102.9 × 68.9 cm. Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium.*
 IMAGE © ROYAL LIBRARY OF BELGIUM.

a second set of scales, hanging in the sky above Ferdinand III, that symbolizes divine, not terrestrial Justice. It bears the inscription 'it [the sun] balances day and night' ('aequat noctemq[ue] diemq[ue]'). The scales are positioned between the zodiacal signs of the Virgin (related to innocence and kindness) and the Scorpion (linked with slander and malice); they illuminate the sky with their triumphant rays. In addition to her status as a Virtue, associated with the Emperor, the figure of *Justitia* also pertains to the thesis topic. The doctoral candidates' academic research, inscribed on stone tablets, focused on international law and, more specifically, on the problem of legislating in times of war and peace, an issue that was topical during the Thirty Years' war (1618–1648).¹³ The double meaning of Justice is of course not new. In the iconographic program of Raphael's Stanza della Segnatura in the Vatican Palace, the personification of Justice painted on the vault embodies law as an academic discipline as well as one of the cardinal Virtues (her sisters are depicted in the lunette on the wall below) [Figs. 15.3–4]. According to the Platonic doctrine advocated by St. Augustine, Justice is regarded as superior to the other cardinal Virtues, Fortitude, Prudence and Temperance, and is here placed between Theology, Philosophy and Poetry.¹⁴ As such, she is integrated into the disciplines or faculties comprised by the tradition of the Liberal Arts.¹⁵ Similarly, the personification in the Morel thesis fulfills a double function: she illustrates the academic content of the thesis, as well as serving the political purpose of the engraving, which consists in affirming Ferdinand III as an upholder of justice. Unlike a text that explains figures in a more linear fashion, an allegorical image is synoptic and encourages the simultaneous consideration of its attributes, thus allowing for the intercalation of multiple messages. Far from conveying a conventional and unambiguous meaning, personifications can function as hermeneutical instruments that open up new interpretations responsive to various religious, economic or political contexts.¹⁶ In the engraving by van Diepenbeeck, the allegorical figure of Justice is richer than its abstract signified, codified by authors such as Cesare Ripa, since 'she' contains

13 Diels A., "Uit de schaduw van Rubens". *Prentkunst naar Antwerpse historieschilders* [exh. cat., Royal Library of Belgium] (Brussels: 2009) 54–55.

14 Emiliani A., *Raphaël: la Chambre de la Signature*, Chefs-d'œuvre de l'art italien (Paris: 2002) 58–59, 200–201.

15 Gombrich E.H., *Symbolic Images: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance* (London: 1972) 88–89.

16 Fanlo J.-R., "Rigueur et exubérance: quelques paradoxes de la représentation allégorique à la fin de la Renaissance", in Gardes-Tamine J. (ed.), *L'Allégorie corps et âme. Entre personification et double sens* (Aix-en-Provence: 2002) 141–160.



FIGURE 15.3 *Raphael, Justice (ceiling tondo). Stanza della Segnatura, Palazzi Pontifici, Vatican (1508–1511). Fresco, diameter: 180 cm.*
 IMAGE © 2014. PHOTO SCALA FLORENCE.



FIGURE 15.4 *Raphael, The Cardinal Virtues (lunette from the south wall). Stanza della Segnatura, Palazzi Pontifici, Vatican (1508–1511). Fresco, width at the base: 660 cm. IMAGE © 2014. PHOTO SCALA, FLORENCE.*

additional meanings linked to the university subject and associated with the staging of imperial power.

A second instance of personification appears in the *Theses physiomaticae*¹⁷ that were debated at the Jesuit school of mathematics in Louvain in 1651, under the direction of Professor André Tacquet.¹⁸ They included the

17 *Positiones physico-mathematicae ex optica, statica, bellica, quas serenissimo archiduci Leopoldo dicatas et in imagine perampla in aes incisa expressas, praeside R.P. Andrea Tacquet Societatis Iesu matheseos professore, propugnabit illustrissimus dominus Philippus Eugenius comes de Hornes et de Herlies. In Collegio Societatis Iesu Lovanii 29 martii hora 9. ante et 3. post meridiem. Lovanii, typis Andreae Bouvetii, 1651.* In-quarto booklet of 8 pages (not found), whose title refers directly to the plate summarizing the positions. Philippe E. de Hornes had already defended theses in physics and mathematics in an academic session on January 31, 1650. See Vijver, “L’école de mathématiques des Jésuites” 273–275.

18 André Tacquet (1612–1660), was a Jesuit mathematician active in the Low Countries. He entered the order in 1629 and became professor at the Jesuit school of mathematics in

publication of an in-quarto booklet and a large broadside engraved by Pieter Danoot after Antoine Sallaert [Fig. 15.5].¹⁹ Eleven conclusions on optics, statics and ballistics are inscribed on a large pedestal while the dedication figures on a cartouche placed just above it. The dissertation is addressed to Ferdinand III's brother, Leopold William of Austria, who was governor of the Spanish Netherlands from 1647 to 1656.²⁰ He is represented sitting on a throne with his coat of arms, which is held by a lion identified by the adverb 'powerfully' ('Fortiter'). Next to him, a woman embodying Justice holds a balance and a book bearing the inscription 'equitably' ('Iuste'). She looks at the *promoven-dus*, Count Philippe Eugène de Hornes,²¹ followed by Minerva. Ahead of him, a putto presents both his shield and a miniature copy of the broadsheet to the Archduke. A woman leaning against the stone plinth tightly grips a magnifying glass. Her identity, Prudence, is revealed by a leaf slipping out of a tome mentioning 'sagaciously' ('Prudenter').²² At her side, however, a cherub looking through a telescope seems to point out that she is at the same time a personification of Optics, one of the three subjects developed in the academic essay. Justice is here naturally associated with statics, the discipline examining bodies in equilibrium, given that both are often pictured with scales in hand. These allegorical figures therefore clearly create a polysemy that then permeates the scene as a whole. It is also often the case that Minerva, when she appears in

Louvain in 1644. In 1651, his treatise *Cylindricorum et annularium libri IV* was issued in Antwerp; in 1654, he published his *Elementa geometriae planae ac solidae* and two years later his *Arithmeticae theoria et praxis*. He was highly esteemed, and his books on geometry were used in Jesuit colleges until the end of the eighteenth century. See Bosmans H., Tacquet (André), in *Biographie nationale de Belgique* (Brussels: 1926–1929) vol. 24, cols. 440–464; and Bousquet-Bressolier C., "Les mathématiques de l'honnête homme. Manuels pratiques à l'usage des officiers et ingénieurs au XVII^e siècle", *Revue française d'histoire du livre* 114–115 (2002) 85–87.

- 19 The attribution to Sallaert is disputed. See Goossens B., *Catalogus Schilderkunst Kasteel van Gaasbeek* (Gaasbeek: 2003) 130–133.
- 20 Numerous theses were dedicated to Leopold William of Austria. In addition to the engravings dealt with in this chapter, these include a thesis defended in Douai in 1655, engraved by Petrus Clouwet after Jean-Baptiste Van Heil (Royal Library of Belgium), and *Mount Carmel*, a large engraving after Abraham van Diepenbeek, preserved at the Church of St. Charles Borromeo, Antwerp.
- 21 Philippe Eugène de Hornes, Count of Houtekerke and Herlies (c. 1634), died in October 1677. See Goethals F.V., *Dictionnaire généalogique et héraldique des familles nobles du Royaume de Belgique*, vol. 3 (Brussels: 1850) 276–282.
- 22 Mertens J., "Hulde, Vleierij en relatiegeschenk", in Mertens J. – Aumann F. (eds.), *Krijg en Kunst. Leopold Willem (1614–1662), Habsburger, landvoogd en kunstverzamelaar* [exh. cat., Landcommanderij Alden Biesen] (Bilzen: 2003) 243–244 (cat. II.3.16).

thesis prints, is herself polysemous, since she is usually portrayed as the goddess of Art, Science or Wisdom, as well as the *persona* of war. Her presence stresses the timely relevance of the defense to the military context, an allusion strengthened by the presence of two cannons and a besieged town in the background. Moreover, she also correlates to another field of expertise—namely, ballistics—which is represented by the cannonball launched at the far right of the picture.

Members of the aristocracy were an important group of potential students targeted by the Jesuits. The noblemen who attended courses at the school of mathematics were certainly not interested in a professional engineering education. But they might have regarded such training as a good alternative to Aristotelian natural philosophy or classical humanism. Jesuit colleges became pioneers in mathematical instruction, as their program of study, the *Ratio studiorum*, encouraged the reading of Euclid.²³ Their teaching in this discipline played an important role in acculturating elite audiences to the mathematical underpinnings of a scientific education.²⁴ Moreover, they were mostly concerned with the military applications of this field: fortification, cartography, techniques of navigation and machines of war. This practical interest, as expressed in the concrete scientific program favored by teaching Jesuits of the Flemish-Belgian Province, can be explained as a response to the continuous state of war in the Southern Low Countries. Even though the Twelve Years' Truce (1609–1621) was still ongoing when the mathematical course opened in Antwerp in 1617, it was not clear whether the peace agreements between the Archdukes Albert and Isabella and the Republic would be extended.²⁵

The college became popular thanks to François de Aguilón and Grégoire de Saint-Vincent, and remained influential until the death of André Tacquet in 1660. In other words, it flourished during the Eighty Years' War, and as a consequence, the preoccupation with military affairs, seen in the Morel thesis and its bodying forth of War and Peace, also informs frontispieces and other engraved works associated with this and other Jesuit schools. The figuration of this theme tacitly declared the order's support for the foreign policy of the ruler chosen as thesis patron. This is particularly the case for dissertations dedicated to Leopold William. The title page of a philosophical thesis defended

23 Bousquet-Bressolier, "Les mathématiques de l'honnête homme" 79.

24 Vanpaemel, "Jesuit Mathematicians" 126. See also Romano A., *La contre-réforme mathématique, constitution et diffusion d'une culture mathématique jésuite à la Renaissance (1540–1640)*, Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome 306 (Rome: 1999).

25 Bruycker, "En todo amar y servir a su divina majestad" 49. On the interplay between the mathematical sciences and warfare, see Remmert V., *Picturing the Scientific Revolution, Early Modern Catholicism and the Visual Arts Series 4* (Philadelphia: 2011) 97–126.



in Douai in 1648 depicts Minerva, the goddess of War, who also brings peace and prosperity [Fig. 15.6].²⁶ The shield she is holding displays the Archduke's

26 De Schepper M. – Mertens J., "Dank vanwege een page", in Mertens – Aumann, *Krijg en Kunst* 185 (cat.11.1.25).



FIGURE 15.6 *Cornelis Galle after Erasmus Quellinus, Leopoldo Guillelmo Austriaco forti sapienti belli pacisque moderatori. Title page to a philosophy thesis defended by Christoph Bredau, College of Anchin, Douai (1648). Engraving, 23.6 × 17.6 cm. Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium.*

IMAGE © ROYAL LIBRARY OF BELGIUM.

coat of arms. In the same year, a frontispiece containing the representation of 'Fortiter' (lion) and 'Suaviter' (lamb) was engraved by Adriaan Lommelin after Antoine Sallaert for a thesis on theology [Fig. 15.7]. The two virtues attributed to the governor pay him homage by brandishing a sword and a palm over his portrait medallion, thus highlighting his dual status as victor and peacemaker, and also as defender of the Roman Catholic sacraments.²⁷

To the right in the engraving of the *Theses physiomathematicae*, an eagle is accompanied by the Latin inscriptions 'He maintains his balance justly' ('Iuste libratur'), 'With force he takes possession' ('Fortiter occupat') and 'What is right protects' ('Rectum tuetur'). This eagle, part Jovian, part Habsburg, undoubtedly represents Leopold William, as it reiterates qualities already staged by the personifications: with strength, prudence and equity, the Archduke shall maintain equilibrium.²⁸ Therefore, the composition gathers a rich and varied vocabulary, as the dedicatee, made present by a full-length portrait, is associated with personifications of Christian virtues, which can also be interpreted as academic fields. Simultaneously, Minerva is seen to offer her support to the student of noble origin, and in addition, the small auto-reflexive image of the broadside in the broadside, by calling attention to the act of donation, pays homage to the author of the thesis. The allegorical figures, both *in parte* and *in toto*, must be understood to operate in tandem with the public ceremony of the defense: both it and they celebrate the successful candidate's acquisition of knowledge. The broadsheet as a whole proclaims to the viewer/reader that the *promovendus* has passed the university examination, acknowledging this attainment at the very moment of its occurrence. Personifications and 'experimenter putti'²⁹ encircle the young man, alluding to the discoveries he has made during his *cursus* of learning. These 'putti-pupils' are active: they point out or design geometric patterns (fig. 5), handle compasses, squares, telescopes (fig. 5, 9), read books (fig. 8), play music instruments or practice with weaponry (fig. 2, 6). The schoolboys are not decorative cupids (such as the *reggistema* or *reggifestone* putti described by Charles Dempsey,³⁰ also numerous in thesis

27 Van Ormelingen J.-J., "Twee verdedigers van de sacramenten", in Mertens – Aumann, *Krijg en Kunst* 259–260 (cat. II.3.30).

28 Mertens, "Hulde, Vleierij en relatiegeschenk" 243.

29 "Les *putti* expérimentateurs des *thèses*", in Dhombres J. – Radelet de Grave P. (eds.), *Une mécanique donnée à voir. Les thèses illustrées défendues à Louvain en juillet 1624 par Grégoire de Saint-Vincent* (Turnhout: 2008) 202–208.

30 Charles Dempsey, in his analysis of the figure of the putto in the Renaissance, distinguishes between the cherub supporting swags of 'feste romane', called *reggifestone* or garland-bearing, and the *reggistema* putto, the shield-bearing type that appears in coats



FIGURE 15.7 *Adriaan Lommelin after Antoine Sallaert, Title page to Synopsi theologica, defended by Humbert de Precipiano, Jesuit College of Louvain (1648). Engraving, 39.3 × 24.1 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.*
 IMAGE © RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM.

prints), but they play a true scientific role in the narrative. Their participation in the academic research aims to recount the experimental journey of exploration traveled by the student throughout the course of his study, and highlights his learning efforts. This initiatory journey was completed with the academic defense, a rite of passage that ends by affirming the former neophyte's thorough familiarization with scientific knowledge.³¹ Moreover, the Society of Jesus is also valorized, as these images emphasize the quality of its teaching.

The third case study is a large broadside conceived by Abraham van Diepenbeeck and executed by Nicolas Lauwers, likewise dedicated to Leopold William of Austria [Fig. 15.8]. The *Theses mathematicae ex geometria*³² were defended by Théodore d'Immerseel, Count of Brouckhoven,³³ under the supervision of Professor André Tacquet in 1652. Geometric diagrams and working drawings fill the walls in the background of the scene. Seven allegorical representations of Science appear, easily recognizable by their attributes. They include Arithmetic (numbers), Statics (balance), Cosmography (astrolabe), Optics (telescope), Music (music instrument), Geometry (compass) and Military Architecture (cannon). They are escorted by putti bearing paper sheets summarizing the Latin theses at issue. The Muses, along with figures of Saturn and Eternity, form two distinct groups around the central portrait medallion of the Archduke. This broadside proved popular: the composition was imitated in a Chinese picture, maybe after a copy of the thesis that the Flemish Jesuit missionary Ferdinand Verbiest, pupil of Tacquet, brought with him when he went to China in 1657.³⁴ In turn, the broadside emulates a similar depiction of scientific embodiments that adorns the title page of a thesis defended in

of arms, plaques and illuminated manuscripts. See Dempsey C., *Inventing the Renaissance Putto*, Bettie Allison Rand Lectures in Art History (Chapel Hill: 2001) 28.

31 Vital-Durand F., *Art et langage. Les frontispices allégoriques de la science à l'Âge classique*, Mémoires d'excellence (Paris: 2011) 178–179.

32 *Theses mathematicae ex geometria, arithmetica, architectura militari, cosmographia, statica, optica, musica, quas serenissimo archiduci Leopoldo Wilhelmo dicatas et aenea tabula amplissime expressas, praeside R.P. Andrea Tacquet Societatis Iesu matheseos professore, tuebitur ac demonstrabit illustrissimus dominus Theodorus d'Immerselle comes de Bouchove et S. Imperii. In Collegio Societatis Iesu Lovanii 3 Septembris hora 9. ante et 3. post meridiem. Lovanii, Typis Andreae Bouvetii. Anno MDCLII.* Again, the title of the libretto detailing the positions mentions the image made as an invitation to the defense.

33 Brief note in Raadt J.-Th. De, *Sceaux armoriés des Pays-Bas et des pays avoisinants (Belgique, Royaume des Pays-Bas, Luxembourg, Allemagne, France). Recueil historique et héraldique* (Brussels: 1897–1903) 135.

34 Golvers N., "A Chinese Imitation of a Flemish Allegorical Picture Representing the Muses of European Sciences", *T'Oung Pao* 81,4 (1995) 303–314.



FIGURE 15.8 *Nicolas Lauwers after Abraham van Diepenbeeck, Theses mathematicae ex geometria, arithmetica, architectura militari, defended by Théodore d'Immerseel, Jesuit School of Mathematics, Louvain (1652). Engraving, 98 × 68.5 cm. Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium.*

IMAGE © ROYAL LIBRARY OF BELGIUM.

the same school in 1640, and edited in the form of a textbook, the *Disciplinae mathematicae traditae* [Fig. 15.9].³⁵ The main discipline, Mathematics, sits like a queen on a pedestal in the center, accompanied by a cherub holding compass and protractor, while below, a second putto presents calipers, and a third child carries a set-square and a sundial. She is encircled by Military Architecture (stronghold map and cannon), Geometry (proportional compass), Arithmetic (angle),³⁶ Astronomy (armillary sphere), Statics (scales) and Optics (mirror).

35 Title page, engraved by Jacob Neeffs after Philip Fruytiers, to the *Disciplinae mathematicae traditae* supervised by Jan Ciermans (Louvain, Everaerd de Witte: 1640). See Bruycker, “En todo amar y servir a su divina majestad” 49; and Dhombres – Radelet de Grave, *Une mécanique donnée à voir* 161–166.

36 The instrument held by Arithmetic is not easy to identify. It seems to be an angular measuring apparatus, and as such, would match with one of the fields taught in November. The third part of this month was dedicated to the study of sines, tangents, etc.



FIGURE 15.9 *Jacob Neeffs after Philip Fruytiers, Title page of *Disciplinae mathematicae traditae*, supervised by Jan Ciermans, Jesuit School of Mathematics, Louvain (1640). Engraving, 28.5 × 17.7 cm. Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium.*
 IMAGE © ROYAL LIBRARY OF BELGIUM.

The attributes are not exactly identical in the two engravings, but their associated personifications definitely belong to the same allegorical idiom. No less than one quarter of this richly illustrated book is divided into monthly teachings devoted to military subjects (encampment, battle array, fortification, gunpowder and attack techniques), having to do with the practical applications of mathematics in contemporary life.

In the *Theses mathematicae ex geometria*, Arithmetic is the only personification whose signification is not immediately apparent. She holds up a board engraved with the number 'one' followed by fourteen zeroes. The image is a known numerical allegory referring to human 'nullity', which can also be found in the *Imago primi saeculi*. This widely circulated book was published in Antwerp in 1640 on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the Society of Jesus. It contains 126 emblems engraved by Cornelis Galle. On page 722, the image displays a putto looking at the viewer and writing the number '1' and twelve '0's on a board hanging from a tree [Fig. 15.10].³⁷ Two captions frame the illustration inserted within a richly decorated cartouche: the title 'Blessed Francis Borgia raises the prestige of his family with virtue' ('B. Franciscus Borgia stemma suum virtute nobilitat'), and the motto 'O is nothing, but it renders numbers innumerable' ('O, nihil: at numeros sic facit innumeros'). In a similar manner, the attribute held by Arithmetic in the thesis print of d'Immerseel refers to the importance of exemplary behavior, implicitly indicated in the sentence accompanying the numbers: 'the fact that one is capable of so much depends on one thing' ('Quod tantum valeamus ab uno est')—namely, Virtue.³⁸ In that way, the feminine personification is designated both as a scientific discipline and as a virtue, associated with the Archduke since she seems to address him with her look and gesture.

Next to her, Statics holds a balance in which lies a cross, accompanied by the word 'piety' ('Pietati'). The second pan contains a military baton, symbol of authority, inscribed 'power' ('Potestas'). The formula 'Est aequa[bile]' above stresses the equal weight of the two virtues. Once again, an attribute identifiable with a scientific field stretches to accommodate another function: it asserts the governor's piety and power. Actually, if one takes a closer look at the personifications, one discovers other allusions to Leopold William's virtues. The astrolabe held by Cosmography states 'I look at your stars' ('Tua sidera spectro').

37 Bolland J. – de Tollenaer J., *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu, a provincia Flandro-Belgica eiusdem Societatis repraesentata* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1640) 722.

38 According to the Jesuit D. Bouhours, this sentence indicates the fact that the Flemish take all their pride and power from this prince. See *Les entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugène* (Paris, Sébastien Marbre-Cramoisy: 1671) 433.



FIGURE 15.10 *Cornelis Galle, "B. Franciscus Borgia stemma suum virtute nobilitat". Engraving, 10.4 × 13.9 cm. Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu, a Provincia flandro-belgica eiusdem Societatis repraesentata (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1640) 722. Brussels, Royal Library of Belgium.*

IMAGE © ROYAL LIBRARY OF BELGIUM.

The instrument is used to observe celestial bodies, but is here oriented toward the governor, for the stars are meant to denote his destiny. Optics is thereby again associated with Prudence. The feminine figure is wrapped in a banner inscribed 'Your prudence transcends our beholding' ('Obtutum tua praecellit prudentia nostrum'), while Geometry declares 'Your virtue escapes any measure' ('Mensuram refugit virtus tua'). Two cherubs in front of Music hold a book with the words 'I will sing your exploits' ('Tua facta canam').

Again, Minerva embodies the goddess of War as well as an academic subject defended by the student, Military Architecture. The medallion she holds no longer functions merely as a defensive shield, but is diverted from its

primary purpose and now offers a medium for the conveyance of a scientific text. She bears a spear inscribed 'Minor est ars mea marte tuo' ('My talent is smaller than your resources'). Therefore, each feminine figure in this engraving offers a double reading: firstly, as a personification of the scientific field being defended, she holds her usual attribute; secondly, she carries a political, apologetic meaning, as the embodiment of a virtue or concept closely associated with the Archduke of Austria. Other inscriptions can be read around the portrait: 'To the example of commandment' ('Ad exemplum imperii'), 'To the glory of government' ('Ad famam gubernationis') and 'In this sign conquer' ('In hoc signo vince'), a variation of the Latin phrase used as a motto by Constantine I. A celestial vision of the cross and the Greek version of the sentence ('Ἐν τούτῳ νίκα') had appeared to the emperor before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge that marked the beginning of his reign. These watchwords are included to exalt the governor's power and confirm his attachment to the Catholic faith, which guides his political decisions.

Finally, the winged man gripping an hourglass and a bludgeon is a combination of Hercules and Chronos. As a result of his exemplary choice at the crossroads between virtue and vice, Hercules became a major model for Habsburg princes. Cesare Ripa, in the *Iconologia*, associated the demigod with princely virtue.³⁹ Moreover, he was seen to embody qualities suitable for the discerning patron, and as such, became both an exemplum and personification of aristocratic ideals: the native aptitude for learning, the ability to assimilate and disseminate knowledge, the predilection for thought combined with action. Hercules was often associated with Atlas in the frontispieces of mathematics books, where he denotes astronomy,⁴⁰ and sometimes also recalls the figure of Chronos. His attributes in the *Theses mathematicae ex geometria* are combined with the words 'To Time the Victor' ('Tempori Victori'): Time will prove Leopold William right as he shows himself to be virtuous, following Hercules' example. His counterpart on the other side of the medallion is Eternity. The woman holds an ouroboros, the snake biting its own tail. She displays the formula 'To peaceful Eternity' ('Pacifcae Aeternitati'), which can also be translated 'To eternal Peace', the goals toward which the good ruler tends. These terms were frequently applied to military leaders who strive for peace by waging war against enemies who leave them no choice. The dedication that

39 Polleroß F., "From the Exemplum Virtutis to the Apotheosis: Hercules as an Identification Figure in Portraiture: An Example of the Adoption of Classical Forms of Representation", in Ellenius A. (ed.), *Iconography, Propaganda, and Legitimation, The Origins of the Modern State in Europe, 13th to 18th Centuries*, Theme G (Oxford: 1998) 40.

40 Remmert, *Picturing the Scientific Revolution 127–165*.

extends across the central pedestal explicitly refers to Leopold William's reconquest of the Flemish port of Gravelines in the very same year, on May 18, 1652:

[The candidate] has devoted as an offering now and forever to His Serene Highness, Prince Leopold William, Archduke of Austria, etc., governor of the Belgians and of Burgundy in the name of the king, the peaceful conqueror who, after having snatched Gravelines, 'lock of Flanders',⁴¹ from the enemy, fights in France for mutual peace between the kingdoms, an olive branch of peace combined with the laurel of victory, having dedicated himself and his Mathematics very modestly to the august name [of Leopold William].⁴²

The concepts of Time and Eternity are recalled in the last lines of the Latin dedication. 'For the occasion' ('Pro tempore')⁴³ could refer to the Archduke's current victories evoked in the text, which confirm the merits of the prince. 'And for Eternity' ('Et Aeternitate') could mean that the student wishes him an ever happy future. In this way, the laureate expresses to Leopold William his hopes ('votum posuit') for the present but also for the future, and even for eternity. Both temporalities are depicted in the shape of contrasting figures responding to each other. The title finds an echo in the formula 'I observe your stars' ('Tua sidera spectro'): the present allows one to look ahead and foresee what the governor promises to bestow. The propagandistic purpose of this complex image is thus enhanced by the laudatory inscription alluding to the contemporaneous situation.

The broadsheets executed for Philippe Eugène de Hornes and for Théodore d'Immerseel are fine instances of the euphoria that surfaced in the Southern Low Countries in this period after the reconquests achieved by the governor

41 The Latin word *claustra* means 'lock': Gravelines and Dunkerque were considered strategic because of their location between the Spanish and French lines in the Flemish territory.

42 'Serenissimo principi Leopoldo Guilielmo, archiduci Austriae etc., Belgarum et Burg[undiae] pro rege gubern[at]o, victori pacifico, post claustra Flandriae Gravelingam hosti ereptam, in Gallia pro regnorum communi pace pugnanti, iunctam victricis lauro oleam pacificam sacrum pro tempore et aeternitate votum p[osuit] cum nomini eius augusto se et suas hasce mathematicas disciplinas cultu demississimo dedicaret'. I would like to thank Grégory Ems for his translation of the dedication and the other Latin inscriptions.

43 *Pro tempore* literally means: 'according to the time' and is often used to signify 'for the occasion', or here: 'in accordance with the present circumstances', 'taking the concomitant events into account'.

and his army.⁴⁴ Theses were distributed for the purpose of dispensing praise multiply: the *promovendus* is congratulated for his success; the patron is thanked for enabling the thesis to be defended (through his financial contribution and, in the case of Leopold William, through provision of favorable political and military circumstances); and finally the Jesuits are extolled for the commendable teaching that facilitated the student's academic achievement.

This raises the issue of the thesis print designer(s). As the mathematician André Tacquet supervised both works, we can assume that he, like other professors, was partly responsible for the iconographic program. Thesis prints also afforded candidates the opportunity to display their erudition and training in the art of emblems, acquired from the school curriculum. Moreover, one has to bear in mind that thesis engravings were commissioned from specialized artists, and the result was likely a fruitful collaboration among the professor, the student, and the artist. It is important to emphasize the connections between the Jesuits and the painters who co-conceived and designed these pictorial allegories. Abraham van Diepenbeeck (1596–1675) was a fervent supporter of the Society of Jesus. In 1634, he was a member of the 'Sodaliteit der bejaarde jonckmans', a confraternity established by the Jesuits for the young unmarried men of Antwerp. He became a counsellor of the Sodaliteit two years later.⁴⁵ Antoine Sallaert was also very close to the Jesuit circle in Brussels and carried out numerous works for them.⁴⁶ Under the rule of Leopold William, who had himself received a Jesuit education during his residency at the Spanish court, the order continued to exert a powerful influence on the religious and political cultures of Southern Low Countries. The iconography developed in thesis prints aligns with the imagery of the ideal Archduke that Jesuit professors wanted to convey: he is portrayed, implicitly and explicitly, as a 'devout and warrior prince' ('prince dévôt et guerrier', according to the title of the biography written by Nicolas Avancini in 1667), who closely follows the *Pietas Austriaca*. In this narrative (and in the numerous pictorial representations of him), Leopold William is promoted as a *Miles Christianus* who devotes time and energy to prayer and meditation, the wellsprings of the military exploits through which he defends the Roman Catholic faith and the House of Habsburg.⁴⁷ The thesis

44 Mertens J., "De gehuldigde krijgshoer", in Mertens – Aumann, *Krijg en Kunst* 83.

45 Vlieghe H., "Abraham van Diepenbeeck", in Ramade P. – Beyer M. de – Vlieghe H. (eds.), *Dans la lumière de Rubens. Peintres baroques des Pays-Bas du Sud* (Paris: 2000) 50.

46 Vennet M. Van der, "Le peintre bruxellois Antoine Sallaert", *Bulletin des Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique* 1,3 (1974–1980) 184.

47 Vlieghe H., "'Frayicheyt ende kunst daer syne inclinatie toe stryckt'. Beschouwingen over het mecenaat van aartshertog Leopold Wilhelm tijdens zijn landvoogdij over de

prints studied in this chapter demonstrate the dual exigencies of *arma* and *pax*, arguing that one must fight for peace if faith is to be secured. The trope of duality pervades these prints that often turn on the relation between *Fortiter* and *Suaviter*, present Time and Eternity, the dichotomous *personae* of Minerva who embodies both Science and War, and linked personifications of Optics and Prudence, Justice and Law, Arithmetic and Martial Virtue, etc.

Conclusion

To conclude, thesis prints offer an interesting medium for the investigation of the rhetorical functions of personification in the seventeenth century. Visual allegory played a double role in scientific publications: socio-political when used by teachers and laureates to obtain or affirm patronage relationships, and epistemological when used as an illustration of knowledge or as a strategy to legitimize the practical and scholarly value of mathematical disciplines. Professors, and mostly Jesuits through their college teaching, maintained close ties with former students, future leaders and rich *patroni*. They fostered connections with powerful intermediaries capable of providing the sponsorship the order needed to carry out its objectives.⁴⁸ The allegorical and emblematic eulogies they cultivated in the numerous graphic works they conceived and propagated (thesis broadsheets, *affixiones* and frontispieces to booklets of poems or plays) involve a pseudo-paradox since it is never really clear if they serve mainly to promote the glory of the prince, of the students or of the Society of Jesus.⁴⁹ In fact, these multiple objectives were construed as reconcilable, just as the personifications that populate many thesis prints are composite, part mythological exemplum, part virtuous embodiment, and often comprising more than one virtue or discipline. Thesis engravings were appreciated as ornate, even extravagant gifts, devised as species of *mirabilia* for an aristocratic, clerical or wealthy elite. Such showpieces made their identity, virtues and actions visible to a learned audience during the defenses, the staged ‘theaters of scholarship.’⁵⁰ Furthermore, the laureates had the opportunity

Zuidelijke Nederlanden (1647–1656)”, in Vlieghe H. – Stighelen K. Van der (eds.), *Sponsors of the Past: Flemish Art and Patronage 1550–1700* (Turnhout: 2005) 61–62.

48 Bruycker, “‘En todo amar y servir a su divina majestad’” 42.

49 Ems G., ‘*Imago principis*’. *La représentation du pouvoir dans les affichages du collège jésuite bruxellois sous la régence de Léopold-Guillaume de Habsbourg* [1647–1656], 3 vols. (Ph.D. thesis, Université catholique de Louvain: 2012) 111, 178.

50 Remmert, *Picturing the Scientific Revolution* 201–203.

to display their intellectual skills. They expertly combined images, emblems, poems and chronograms, demonstrating not only their command of their chosen field of study, but also their mastery of pictorial expression and eloquence.⁵¹ In these ceremonial prints, the technique of personification, adapted from the visual figures of rhetorical usage, invited richly multiple readings. The allegorical language was shared by professors, students, sponsors and artists, as all of them belonged to the same philosophical, erudite and courtly world. If the hermeneutic practices activated by such graphic material achieved their maximum potential within an academic framework, they were also rooted in the contemporaneous political, socio-cultural and scholarly environment. Higher education had a stake in patronage, propaganda, social persuasion and military affairs. The practice of personification was a way of bridging the tensions between academic tradition and scientific developments, between the curricula of universities and Jesuit colleges, between the functions of noetic affirmation and encomiastic *poesis*.

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⁵¹ Bousquet-Bressolier, “Les mathématiques de l’honnête homme” 87.

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Vermeer, the Art of Meditation, and the Allegory of Faith

Aneta Georgievska-Shine

[...] and thus the least things in the universe must be secret mirrors to the greatest.

*Thomas de Quincey*¹

And as for the symbolism of the triple sphere, of that globe which the Church, seized by her high ideal, tramples under foot, of that culpable fruit, which she has rejected, scarcely tasted, and of that perfect and transparent truth which her desire contemplates—what could be simpler to interpret?

*Paul Claudel*²

One of the most admired aspects of Vermeer's approach to representation is the open-endedness of his visual constructs. This is true both of his slice-of-life images of Dutch interiors featuring contemplative, solitary figures, or those that address recognizable or codified narratives, such as his early biblical or mythological inventions. This open-endedness is almost invariably a function of the subversion of conventions: a young woman playing her harpsichord under the watchful gaze of her male teacher appears instantly relatable to compositions by the artist's peers such as Metsu or Van Mieris, yet infinitely

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1 De Quincey I., *Autobiography, The Collected Writings of Thomas de Quincey* (Edinburgh: 1889) 129.

2 Claudel Paul, *Introduction à la peinture Hollandaise* (1935), as cited in Dilnot C. – Garcia-Padilla M., "The Difference of Allegory", *Journal of Philosophy and the Visual Arts* 1,1 (1989) 45.

removed from their concern with music-making as a foil for amorous intrigue. A woman holding a balance may call to mind the negative connotations of the gold-weigher iconography, only to undermine that reading by its counter-allusion to the Virgin Mary.

This subtle mixing of codes makes almost all of Vermeer's compositions feel both like carefully observed instances of 'being' and highly self-conscious allegories. Nor is this a matter of mere visual wit. Rather, his double perspective on the world as a reality comprising observable things-as-such and signs of something beyond themselves reflects a broader cultural concern with the relationship between the material and the metaphysical. Nowhere is this duality more emphatically expressed than in the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York [Fig. 16.1].³ Here, the artist not only straddles the optically-knowable and the symbolic, but highlights the tension between these two modes of knowledge in order to create a meditative painting whose allegorical content depends on the intensely visual and palpably real presence of its constituent elements.

Most scholars have judged the highly staged quality of this late work as an 'anomaly' motivated by a particular program or the wishes of a certain patron—tasks perceived as alien to Vermeer's sensibility. Admittedly, there have been some more generous views as well.⁴ Valerie Hedquist, for instance, has cogently argued that for all its artifice, the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* is a sophisticated visual discourse on sin and redemption.⁵ Another sympathetic

3 *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* (1671–1672). Oil on canvas, 45 × 35 in. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; The Friedsam Collection, Bequest of Michael Friedsam, 1931. For a survey of the prevalent negative criticism of this work to date, see Liedtke W., *Vermeer and the Delft School* [exh. cat., The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York] (New Haven – London: 2001) 399–402. Cf. Liedtke W., *Dutch Paintings in The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 2 vols. (New York: 2007) I, ix–x; II, 893–902.

4 Scholars who have shown greater sensitivity to Vermeer's approach in this allegory include, most notably, Jongh E. de, "Pearls of Virtue and Pearls of Vice", *Simiolus* 8,2 (1975–1976) 69–97; Arasse D., "Vermeer's Private Allegories", *Studies in the History of Art* 55 (New Haven – London: 1998) 340–349; Wheelock A.K., Jr., *Vermeer: The Complete Works* (New York: 1997) 52, 66; Hertel C., *Vermeer: Reception and Interpretation* (Cambridge: 1996) 205–229; Dilnot – Garcia-Padilla, "The Difference of Allegory"; and Liedtke, *Dutch Paintings* II, 893–902.

5 For the most sustained and cogent analysis of this painting as a religious allegory, see Hedquist V.L., "The Real Presence of Christ and the Penitent Mary Magdalen in The Allegory of Faith by Johannes Vermeer", *Art History* 23,3 (2000) 333–364. She is also the author of an excellent overview of the religious context of Vermeer's work: Hedquist V.L., "Religion in the Art and Life of Vermeer", in Franits W.E. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Vermeer* (Cambridge: 2001) 111–131.



FIGURE 16.1 *Johannes Vermeer, Allegory of the Catholic Faith (1671–1672). Oil on canvas, 45 × 35 in. (114.3 × 88.9 cm). New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; The Friedsam Collection, Bequest of Michael Friedsam, 1931 (32.100.18).*

IMAGE © THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART.

critic, Daniel Arasse, has suggested that this painting exemplifies Vermeer's subtle manipulation of iconographic codes to the point of creating essentially 'private' allegories whose meanings would have remained ambiguous even for his contemporaries.⁶ In a similar vein, David R. Smith has related this painting to the artist's broader practice, specifically, to his tendency to challenge the boundaries of traditional pictorial genres.⁷

Vermeer's idiosyncratic and subversive attitude towards generic conventions is surely a key aspect of his proverbial elusiveness. This is true even in the closest parallel of the New York allegory, the *Art of Painting* from Vienna. Both of these compositions are untypically large and strikingly self-conscious visual performances offered to the beholder. Each one opens with a curtain that invites us into a hitherto-unseen and unknown world, while simultaneously drawing our attention to its conditionality. This push and pull movement extends to the semi-occluded chairs that beckon us to sit and contemplate the scene before our eyes, or take the time to reconsider what seemed so instantly knowable at first.⁸

In both of these allegories, the artist exploits the tension between the verisimilar and the symbolic. The important difference, however, is that the discordant notes in the *The Art of Painting*—such as the old-fashioned garb of the painter at the easel, the masquerading of his model as Clio, the chandelier with the Habsburg eagle, or the anachronistic map on the wall—can be subsumed into the pictorial conventions of the artist in the studio. The domestic habitus of *Faith*, on the other hand, remains markedly at odds with its blatantly symbolic content.⁹

6 Arasse, "Vermeer's Private Allegories" 341–343, with reference to seventeenth-century discussions of allegory by Roger de Piles.

7 Smith D.R., "Vermeer and Iconoclasm", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 74,2 (2011) 217–236.

8 The curtain and the empty chair within *The Art of Painting* have aptly been termed an *introductio* into a pictorial reality, which determines the rules of perception that govern its very presence. On this, see Miedema, H., "Johannes Vermeers *Schilderkunst*", *Proef* (1972) 67–76. Similarly 'disclosing' curtains are used to different ends in paintings such as the *Lady Reading a Letter by a Window* in Dresden, *The Lady Writing a Letter with her Maid* in Dublin, and *The Lady Seated at the Virginal* in London. In *The Lady Reading a Letter by a Window*, it is a *trompe l'oeil* device that corresponds to the other display of artistic skill in this painting, most notably, the reflection of the lady's face in the window pane. In later genre paintings such as *Lady Writing a Letter with her Maid*, the curtain seems primarily to be a signal of the viewer's privileged glance into a private experience.

9 Dilnot – Garcia-Padilla, "The Difference of Allegory" 47, for the paradox created by the theatricality of content and the naturalistic setting of this scene.

The painter's model in the guise of the Muse of history, who inspires the forever unfinished (and thus, paradoxically unending) homage to the lofty goal of history painting—the painting we behold—is allegorically admissible because of the studio as a locus of artifice. In contrast, everything about the character at the center of the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith*, be it her blue and white garb and pearl necklace, the globe under her foot, her melodramatic gaze and gesture towards the transparent orb, or the apple and the writhing snake on the floor, amplifies the sense that what we behold is a complex *figura*.

What this chapter proposes is that Vermeer's presentation of the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* as a figured image (*imago figurata*) is essential to its purpose—to provide the beholder with a visual aid for meditation on the highest of Christian virtues. In other words, instead of seeing the pronounced emblematic character of this painting as a kind of deficiency, I suggest that it reflects well-established protocols for visualized meditation. Within this framework, the seemingly uneasy balance between realism and abstraction in the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* is to be understood as a deliberate construct on the part of the artist, rather than an indication of a failure. To reiterate a point from the sensitive reading of Daniel Arasse, this painting is not only a private allegory, but an 'allegory explicitly declared as such'.¹⁰

Figuring Faith for an Unknown Patron

Discussions of *The Allegory of the Catholic Faith* have often involved speculations about its possible patronage. Two suggestions often put forward are that Vermeer may have created this work for a Catholic patron, or even someone from the Jesuit community of his city.¹¹ These speculations find support in several established facts from his biography, most notably, his conversion to Catholicism prior to his marriage, the choice of a Jesuit priest to officiate at his wedding, the names Franciscus and Ignatius given to his first and second sons, respectively, and his residence in the 'Papist' corner of Delft.¹² Moreover,

10 Arasse, "Vermeer's Private Allegories" 341. Cf. Dilnot – Garcia-Padilla, "The Difference of Allegory", on Vermeer's insistence on the artifice of this composition.

11 De Jongh, "Pearls of Virtue" 74–75. Cf. Wheelock A., *Johannes Vermeer* [exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC; Mauritshuis, The Hague] (New Haven – London: 1995) 190–191.

12 De Jongh, "Pearls of Virtue" 75, with reference to Van Peer A., "Rondom Jan Vermeer van Delft: de Kinderen van Vermeer", *Streven* 4 (1950–1951) 615–626. On Vermeer and the Catholic community in Delft, more specifically, the Jesuits, see Hedquist, "Religion in

Paul Begheyn, S.J., has also noted that the dimensions of the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* are comparable to those of other known paintings by Dutch artists used by Jesuits for catechistic purposes.¹³ Nonetheless, the earliest known record of this painting is from a 1699 inventory of a Protestant collector from Amsterdam, where it is described as a 'sitting woman with more than one meaning, depicting the New Testament'.¹⁴ Though this description does not bring us any closer to its possible patron, it is interesting for more than one reason. As Valerie Hedquist has noted, the identification of this work with the New Testament may have been prompted by the presence of the Crucifixion as a painting within the painting, which reinforces the Eucharistic connotations of the chalice, book, and cross on the altar-like table near the figure of Faith.¹⁵

The other qualifier from the 1699 inventory, that this painting has 'more' than one 'meaning' ('meer beteekenis'), is equally interesting since it affirms the status of this work as an allegorical construct rich with interpretive potential. This intention on the part of the painter is illuminated by several formal and iconographic choices. One of them pertains to his selection of attributes for the central figure. Most of them derive from Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, which he could have known from a number of editions, including the 1644 one in Dutch with a preface by Dirck Pers. The blue and white dress of this female figure, the chalice, the apple, and the serpent (Heresy) crushed by the cornerstone (Christ), correspond to Ripa's description of the primary figure of faith (*Geloof; Fede*) from the 1644 Dutch edition.¹⁶ Rather than a simple transposition

the Art and Life" 111–131. For a further study of the possible connection with the Delft Jesuits, see Begheyn P., S.J., "Johannes Vermeer en de Jezüieten te Delft", *Oud Holland* 121,1 (2008) 40–55, where we also find the note on the Jesuit priest officiating at his wedding, 44–45. Furthermore, when the French amateur Balthasar de Monconys visited his studio in 1663, he was accompanied by a Père Léon of the French Embassy in the Hague and a Lieutenant Colonel Gentillo, whose trip was probably motivated by the recent appointment of a Jesuit priest in Delft. On these data, see Montias J.M., *Vermeer and his Milieu: A Web of Social History* (Princeton: 1989) 318, Doc. 294.

13 Begheyn, "Vermeer en de Jezüieten" 48.

14 'Een zittende Vrouw, met meer beteekenis, verbeeldende het Nieuwe Testament, door Vermeer van delft, kragtig en gloejent geschildert'. Auction Herman van Swol, Amsterdam, April 22, 1699, lot. 25; reproduced in De Jongh, "Pearls of Virtue" 69, and repeated in much of the subsequent literature.

15 Hedquist, "The Real Presence" and "Religion in the Art and Life" 127–130.

16 These symbols come from the second in the series of Ripa's personifications of Faith (*Fede, Geloof*) in the Dutch edition of the *Iconologia: Iconologia of uytbeeldingen des Verstands* [...] (Amsterdam, Dirck Pietersz. Pers: 1644) 147. All further references will be to this edition. For a discussion of the relationship of these attributes to the Ripa emblems, see Wheelock, *Johannes Vermeer* 190–191; and Hertel, *Reception and Interpretation* 218–219.

of a single personification, however, Vermeer's figuration of Faith calls to mind several other symbolic images. Her devout gesture, for instance, is shared by Ripa's personifications of Theology and Catholic Faith. The terrestrial globe symbolic of her triumph over worldliness is recognizable as a specific model designed by Hondius and echoes once again Ripa's description of *Theology*, who is shown seated on a celestial globe as a symbol of her knowledge of God.¹⁷ Other adjustments give this composition an even more personal inflection. The book, the chalice, and the crucifix described as attributes of Ripa's Faith are placed against a gilded brocade screen—most likely an object from the artist's household—to enhance the altar-like setting evocative of the Eucharist.¹⁸ Even more telling is the scene of the Crucifixion shown as a painting within the painting on the back wall of this imaginary room. As has long been noted, this painting is Vermeer's substitute for the image of the sacrifice of Isaac suggested by Ripa as an *exemplum* of the victory of Faith.¹⁹

Though some scholars have argued that this substitution was motivated by the presence of an actual painting of the Crucifixion in Vermeer's household, possibly by Jacob Jordaens, this seemingly pragmatic change has an undeniable theological significance.²⁰ In simplest terms, by moving from the Old

17 Ripa, "Fede (Geloof)", in *Iconologia* 147. Cf. "Theologia (Godgeleertheyd)", in *ibid.* 175–176: 'Zy sit op eenen Hemel vol sterren, vermits de Godgeleertheyt haer ruste niet stelt in eenige aerdsche saecken maer gaet regelrich streven nae de kennisse Godes, van waer zy daer nae, een regel en richtsnoer krijgt van wetenschap en kennisse van alle dingen, die haer licht maeckt, in die dingen, die wy met groote verwonderinge, hier op der aerde, met onse oogen aenschouwen'. This emblem is also worth noting because of the rhetorical gesture of the personification. For the relationship between the emblem of *Theologia* and Vermeer's painting, see Wheelock, *Johannes Vermeer* 192. For the identification of the globe with a specific terrestrial model by Hendrik Hondius, see Welu J. "Vermeer: His Cartographic Sources", *The Art Bulletin* 57.4 (1975) 529–547.

18 On the altar-like structure evoked through this formal modification, see Hedquist, "The Real Presence" 335–337; and Wheelock, *Johannes Vermeer* 190–195. I wish to thank Quint Gregory for discussing the placement of the chalice against the frame of the painting within the painting in greater detail during my presentation of this paper at the Pressly Forum, University of Maryland, 2014. For records of the ebony crucifix and the golden brocade screen in Vermeer's household, see Montias, *Vermeer and his Milieu* 190–191.

19 Ripa, *Iconologia* 147: 'In't verschiet wort Abraham mede gestelt, alwaer hy sijnen Soone wilde offerent'.

20 The inventory after Vermeer's death lists a 'large painting representing Christ on the Cross' in his collection, identified as *The Crucifixion* by Jacob Jordaens, Tierninck Foundation, Antwerp. See Montias, *Vermeer and His Milieu*, 340, doc. 364. Vermeer may have omitted the figure of the executioner on the ladder in Jordaens's painting for compositional reasons, or perhaps because the painting in his household was itself a copy after Jordaens.

Testament prefiguration of Christ's sacrifice to its New Testament fulfillment, Vermeer underscored the central doctrine of the Roman Catholic Faith—the mass as a celebration of the Passion of Christ—as well as the doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine of the Eucharist.²¹ Furthermore, the Crucifixion may allude to the famous closing lines of the first “Spiritual Exercise” of St. Ignatius, in which we are asked to imagine Christ on the cross, and then urged to speak with him so as to learn about his self-transformation from God to mortal, and his self-sacrifice for the sins of mankind.²² What makes both of these suggestions even more plausible is status of the Crucifixion as an *imago* within an *imago*, or a second-level artifice. As if emphasizing this point, Vermeer places the chalice at the very edge of the frame of the Crucifixion. In this way, he fashions a bridge between two levels of representation and a reminder of the ‘real’ presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

Into the Temple of Emblems

An equally striking symbolic form is the transparent orb suspended from a blue ribbon, which intrudes preposterously into the space of the room. This motif is generally seen as deriving from a book by the Jesuit Guilielmus Hesius, *Emblemata sacra de fide, spe, charitate*, published in Antwerp in 1636. Eddy de Jongh, who was the first to note this possible source, traced the orb to Emblem XXVI, titled “Capit quod non capit”, in which a winged infant beholds reflections of sunlight and a cross in a similarly fragile, yet all-encompassing sphere [Fig. 16.2].²³ Needless to say, this motif had a much wider cultural currency as well. One can mention here Ripa's description of Religion as a winged female standing next to a cross, with a heavenly sphere suspended from her right hand.²⁴ What

Cf. *ibid.* 189, for the latter opinion, which is also supported by d'Hulst R.A. – Poorter N. de – Vandenven M., *Jacob Jordaens (1593–1678)* [exh. cat., Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp], 2 vols. (Antwerp: 1993) I, cat. A27, 112–113.

21 Hedquist, “The Real Presence” 336–7.

22 Wheelock, *Johannes Vermeer* 192; cf. Hedquist, “The Real Presence” 356–357.

23 De Jongh, “Pearls of Virtue” 73–74, with reference to Emblem XXVI: “Capit quod non capit”, in Hesius Guilielmus, *Guilielmi Hesii Antverpiensis Societate Jesu Emblemata* (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana Balthazaris Moreti: 1633) 88–91. The motto of this emblem comes from *Matthew* 14:31: ‘Modicae Fidei, quare dubitasti?’ (‘O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?’). This orb is not present in any of Ripa's personifications of Faith (*Fede Catholica*, *Fede*, *Fede Christiana Catholica*, etc.); see Ripa, *Iconologia* 147–150.

24 Ripa, *Iconologia* 173: ‘Een vrouwe van een schoon opsicht, rontom met blickende straelen, de borst wit en open, hebbende vleugels op de schouderen [...] staende ter syden een



FIGURE 16.2 Christoffel Jegher after Pieter van Avont, "Capit quod non capit". In [Guilielmus Hesius,] Guilielmi Hesii Antverpiensis Societate Jesu Emblemata de Fide, Spe, Charitate (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1633) 88. Engraving. Washington, DC, The National Gallery of Art.

IMAGE © THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART.

favors Hesius as a source is the particular popularity of this visual trope among the Netherlandish Jesuits, as well as the fact that his emblem book is dedicated to the three cardinal Christian virtues—faith, hope, and charity.²⁵ Moreover, the very first figure that Hesius uses to exemplify the power of Faith is a radiant orb that encloses a set of geometric forms, including a smaller circle within a triangle. Presented at the opening of his treatise, under verses from 1 *Peter* 1:5 about faith as the means through which the believer secures divine protection, this figure focuses the reader on the Neo-Platonic relationship between the *one* and the *all*, as affirmed in the inscription below: ‘Omnia in uno & in omnibus unus’ [Fig. 16.3].²⁶

This notion of the world as a set of mirrors that reflect one another can also be seen in Vermeer’s figure of Faith. Her expensive attire and triumphant stance over the earthly globe, as well as her devout gesture, have often been seen as allusions to Mary Magdalene at the moment of her abandonment of worldly riches.²⁷ Yet both the luxury of her garb and her elaborate attributes also call to mind the Virgin Mother—as celebrated within the Jesuit community of Delft. During the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in Delft in 1679, for instance, the Jesuits set up a statue of the Virgin with the infant Christ in one of their places of worship. According to archival documents, this statue was clothed in a dress richly embellished with gold and pearls, with a crescent moon and a crushed snake at her feet.²⁸

This manifest taste for visual opulence was equally present in Jesuit theatrical masques, conceived as *living emblems*, in which the actors personified the image part of the emblem, while the words they spoke functioned as the

Kruys, en de rechter hand ten Hemel opgeheven hebbende, houtse een Boeck, als een Spiegel, alwaer’t inhoud des wets geschreven staet [...].

25 For the popularity of this motif among the Jesuits, see De Jongh, “Pearls of Virtue” 74–75. For a good overview of the Jesuit imagery in the Netherlands, see Knipping J.B., *Iconography of the Counter-Reformation in the Netherlands: Heaven on Earth*, 2 vols. (Nieuwkoop – Leiden: 1974). Of particular interest for Vermeer’s allegory is the engraving by Cornelis Decker, *Time Trampling on the Eternal Edict*, datable after 1667, in which an ‘orb of eternity’ is similarly suspended above an altar-like table next to the personification of Time; see *ibid.* I, pl. 28.

26 Hesius, *Emblemata sacra* 18.

27 On this figure as Mary Magdalene, see Hedquist, “The Real Presence” 200.

28 Montias, *Vermeer’s Milieu* 202. While this extraordinary staging of the Immaculate Conception is clearly in line with the Jesuit use of morality plays for instructional purposes, Montias still felt that the community would have found this painting a bit too eclectic.

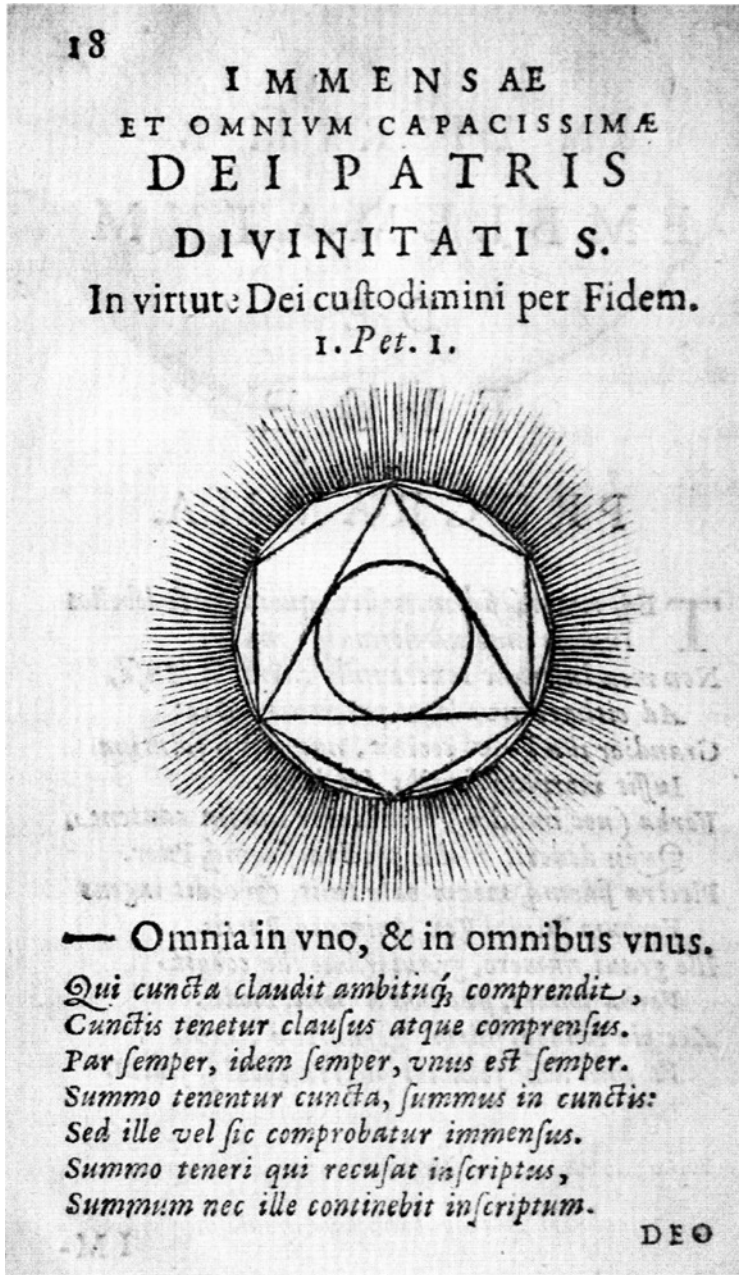


FIGURE 16.3 Christoffel Jegher after Pieter van Avont, "Omnia in uno et in omnibus vnus". In [Guilielmus Hesius,] Guilielmi Hesii Antverpiensis Societate Jesu Emblemata de Fide, Spe, Charitate (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1633) 18. Engraving. Washington, DC, The National Gallery of Art.
IMAGE © THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART.

lemma of the emblematic construction.²⁹ Looking at the figure of Faith in Vermeer's painting, so theatrical in her pose and gesture, one can easily liken her to a 'living emblem' designed in a manner that points both to the sinner and the Redeemer. Such a conflation of the two Maries goes back to early exegeses such as Ambrose, who observed that Jesus called the Magdalene in the name of the Mother of God 'when she began to be converted [...] for it is the soul that gives birth to Christ spiritually'.³⁰ In a similar vein, Peter Comestor called the Magdalene a second Mary because of her presence as a guiding light for the faithful on the sea of life: the 'star of the sea' ('*stella maris*').³¹

The tapestry curtain that opens onto (and simultaneously conceals) the image we behold underscores the difficulty of this spiritual exercise. As in many other compositions, including the *Art of Painting*, Vermeer uses it as a veiling device whose patterns remain tantalizingly unclear. Looking at these fragmentary forms, one is reminded of the Pauline apothegm about the obscurity of human vision (1 *Corinthians* 13:12), as well as its Jesuit correlative that truth can only be expressed through enigmas.³² This idea is also addressed in Hesius's preface to the reader, introduced by another telling emblem: a winged infant (the soul) anchored by faith, hope, and charity, and framed by the famous lines from 1 *Corinthians* about the human condition—to see the world is to gaze at an enigma whose meanings can only be discerned through the mediation of mirrors [Fig. 16.4]. Even the facture of this 'veil' implies that it is primarily a 'cloth of signs', as Victor Stoichita has described Vermeer's tapestries and the manner in which they create both a sense of unity and antithetical relationship to the paintings they introduce.³³ Here we find those characteristic globules of paint that seem both responsive to the laws of optics and utterly capricious, discs of confusion that resolve visible phenomena into specks of

29 On the didactic function of these plays, see Saunders A., "Make the pupils do it themselves': Emblems, Plays, and Public Performances in French Jesuit Colleges in the Seventeenth Century", in Manning J. – Vaeck M. van (eds.), *The Jesuits and the Emblem Tradition: Selected Papers of the Leuven International Emblem Conference, 18–23 August, 1996* (Turnhout: 1999) 187–206.

30 On this complex conflation, see Coletti T., *Mary Magdalene and the Drama of Saints: Theater, Gender, and Religion in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: 2004) 172.

31 Coletti, *Mary Magdalene* 172.

32 See Griffin, N., "Enigmas, Riddles, and Emblems in Early Jesuit Colleges", in Gomes L. (ed.), *Mosaics of Meaning: Studies in Portuguese Emblematics*, Glasgow Emblem Studies 13 (Glasgow: 2009) 21–41, esp. 24.

33 For this idea as it pertains to Vermeer's use of tapestries in general, see Stoichita V., *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight into Early Modern Meta-Painting* (Cambridge: 1997) 265.



FIGURE 16.4 Christoffel Jegher after Pieter van Avont, "Bene conveniunt". In [Guilielmus Hesius,] Guilielmi Hesii Antverpiensis Societate Jesu Emblemata de Fide, Spe, Charitate (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1633) 6. Engraving. Washington, DC, The National Gallery of Art. IMAGE © THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART.

light.³⁴ It is as if Vermeer were trying to remind us that everything we are about to see is contingent upon the limitations of sight; and that we must adjust our vision in order to move from the ephemeral to the absolute.

The only legible figure within this tapestry, the rider on horseback led by a companion, has been tentatively related to the Old Testament story of the meeting of Eliezer and Rebecca—another prefiguration of faith.³⁵ Given the fragmentary nature of this image, the only certainty is a sense of movement, or peregrination. As an idea at the core of the *ars meditandi*, the notion of peregrination goes back to early Christian mystics such as Augustine, who describes the text of the Psalms as the path or *ductus* that leads him from his ‘mental tabernacle’ to God’s ‘house’.³⁶ Among the Jesuits, this idea assumed an even more pointed significance in the context of their itinerant ministry, often described as a ‘house of travel’.³⁷ This is congruent with another suggestion put forward by Arasse and reiterated by several scholars—that the vernacular interior of Vermeer’s *Faith* may allude to the secret Catholic places of worship known as ‘hidden churches’ (‘schuilkerken’), often situated in private residences.³⁸ Vermeer’s family, one might remember, lived practically next door to a Jesuit place of worship, where, according to church registers, they also prayed.³⁹

34 I would like to thank Matthew Lincoln for mentioning these discs of confusion as another possible way in which Vermeer problematizes the project of representation in this work. On these and other formal aspects of his elusiveness, see Filipczak Z.Z., “Vermeer, Elusiveness, and Visual Theory”, *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 32.4 (2006) 259–272.

35 See Knauer E.R., “Vermeers ‘Allegorie des Glaubens’ und Genesis 24, 1–67”, *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 61,1 (1998) 66–77. Specifically, she relates the figure of the camel in this tapestry to Eliezer’s arrival at the Rebecca’s well, and the pose of Vermeer’s female figure to Poussin’s famous representation of this Old Testament scene of 1648, which was also available in engravings. Cf. Liedtke, *Vermeer and the Delft School* 399, who makes a more plausible argument that this tapestry ‘suggests revelation of truth, a holy image, and sacred space’.

36 On this point, see Carruthers M., *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge: 2000) 254.

37 See O’ Malley J., “‘To Travel to any part of the world’: Jerónimo Nadal and the Jesuit Vocation”, *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 16,2 (1984) 1–20; and cf. Melion W.S., “Memory, Place, and Mission in Hieronymus Natalis’ *Evangelicae historiae imagines*”, *Memory and Oblivion: Proceedings of the XXIX International Congress of the History of Art, Amsterdam, 1–7 September, 1996* (Dordrecht: 1999) 603–608, 607.

38 See Arasse D., *Vermeer: Faith in Painting* (Princeton: 1994) 19; Hedquist, “The Real Presence” 339–340; and Liedtke, *Vermeer and the Delft School* 399.

39 De Jongh, “Pearls of Virtue” 74–75. Cf. Montias, *Vermeer and his Milieu* 202, for the secret places of worship of the Delft ‘Papists’.

This level of meaning is also implicit in Ripa's comment on one of his emblems of Faith: he invokes Paul's *Letter to the Corinthians* about the temple of God in the body of the faithful, converted, or, equally appropriate in the Dutch context, persecuted believer.⁴⁰ The self as temple of God was a common metaphor in the context of the various Jesuit 'houses', where members of the order, their students, and supporters daily performed spiritual exercises. Seen in this light, the secluded character of Vermeer's 'mental' temple brings to mind the distinction that the followers of Ignatius of Loyola made between public and private prayer (*collatio* versus *oratio*). Although the Jesuits attempted to correlate private prayer with public prayer, especially with the Mass, spiritual exercises remained their preferred mode of meditating upon one's relationship to God. Thus Jerónimo Nadal speaks of the 'supreme efficacy' of public prayer 'as sacrament and sacrifice', while maintaining the primacy of private prayer in one's place of habitation—or one's private room.⁴¹

Charting the Pathways between Places

Even the placement of individual objects in Vermeer's allegory—as a set of elements to be contemplated in a sequence, rather than as a coherent scenography—can be related to Jesuit image theory. I am referring specifically to the practice of *compositio loci*, or the projection of the subject of meditation into a perceptible setting, a sensorily discernible set of circumstances, for the purpose of creating a *ductus* that facilitates experiential understanding of the

40 In his comment on *Fede Christiana Catholica*, Ripa observes that the heretics are vanquished by the force of persuasion and that the earthly world is deceived, just as God takes the wise in their own craftiness, identifying the locus classicus as Paul's *First Letter to the Corinthians*; see Ripa, *Iconologia* 148: 'Want men moeste de Ketters niet soo strax dooden, maer men moeste overwinnen met reeden en mette waerheyt, stallende de Wereld haere bedriegeryen klaer voor ooghenm gelijk S. Paulus seyt 1 Cor. III: Zy moeten in haere listigheyt gevonden worden, daerom hout dese beeldnisse de Vossen onder haere voeten, want ons Geloof staetse, overwintse en vertreetse ten laesten'. Cf. 1 *Corinthians* 3:19: 'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? In any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness'.

41 O'Malley J., *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge – London: 1993) 164, with reference to *Platicas espirituales del Jerónimo Nadal, S.I., en Coimbra 1561*, ed. M. Nicolau, S.J. (Granada: 1976) 189–190.

mysteries of faith.⁴² This concentration on the visible as the first step in the ascent toward spiritual discernment was the cornerstone of Jesuit instructional literature, as illustrated by such seminal works as Jerónimo Nadal's *Evangelicae historiae imagines* (1593) and Jan David's *Veridicus Christianus* (1601).⁴³

In both of these texts, as in many others, the reader/viewer is presented with images that serve as stepping stones for a mental itinerary that anchors ideas in objects. Suffice it to mention the typical visual layout in Nadal's *Evangelicae historiae imagines*, where sacred events are presented in the form of carefully ordered vignettes (*imagines*) accompanied by verbal commentaries (*adnotationes* and *meditationes*). The plate dedicated to the *Annunciation*, for instance, begins with the congregation of angels at the incarnation of Christ (A); there follow Gabriel's assumption of a human form (B) and the moment when Mary receives the heavenly rays (C) in her house, identified as the Christian church (D) [Fig. 16.5]. The entry of Gabriel and God into the Virgin's chamber (E) is rhetorically echoed in the creation of man in heaven (F), only to draw the eye to the sacrifice of God's Son on the cross (G), before concluding with the angel's announcement of Christ's incarnation in limbo.⁴⁴ Each of these scenes seems to aspire to verisimilitude, while maintaining its artifice through effects of

42 See Buonaiuti E., "Symbols and Rites in Certain Orders", in Campbell J. (ed.), *The Mystic Vision: Papers from the Eranos Yearbook* (Princeton: 1968) 168–210, esp. 194–195. Arasse, *Vermeer: Faith* 82–83, discusses the distinction between Protestant and Catholic meditative practices, suggesting that *The Allegory of Faith* reflects a profoundly Catholic approach to images. This recalls Ignatius's words from the first exercise, 'when the meditation or contemplation is on a visible object [...] the image will consist of seeing with the mind's eye the physical place where the object that we wish to contemplate is present'; see *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, trans. A. Mottola (New York: 1964) 54.

43 Nadal Jerónimo, *Evangelicae historiae imagines: ex ordine Euangeliorum quae toto anno in Missae sacrificio recitantur, in ordinem temporis vitae Christi digestae* (Antwerp, Societas Jesu: 1593), with engravings by the Wierix brothers; and cf. the facsimile reprint of the 1599 Italian edition, *Imagini di Storia Evangelica* (Bergamo: 1976). For the use of these meditative templates as sources of seventeenth-century painting, see Hibbard H., "Ut picturae sermones: The First Painted Decorations of the Gesù", in Wittkower R. – Jaffe I.B. (eds.), *Baroque Art: The Jesuit Contribution* (New York: 1972) 29–51; Freedberg D., "A Source for Rubens' Modello of the Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin" *Burlington Magazine* 120 [194] (1978) 432–441; and Moffitt J.F., "Francesco Pacheco and Jerome Nadal: New Light on the Flemish Sources of the Spanish 'Picture-within-the-Picture'", *The Art Bulletin* 72,4 (1990) 631–638. The most important studies, however, are those of Walter Melion, such as "The Art of Vision in Jerome Nadal's *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia*", in *Jerome Nadal, Annotations and Meditations on the Liturgical Gospels*, vol. 1: *The Infancy Narratives*, trans. F. Homann, S.J. (Philadelphia: 2003) 1–96.

44 *Matthew* 6:4.

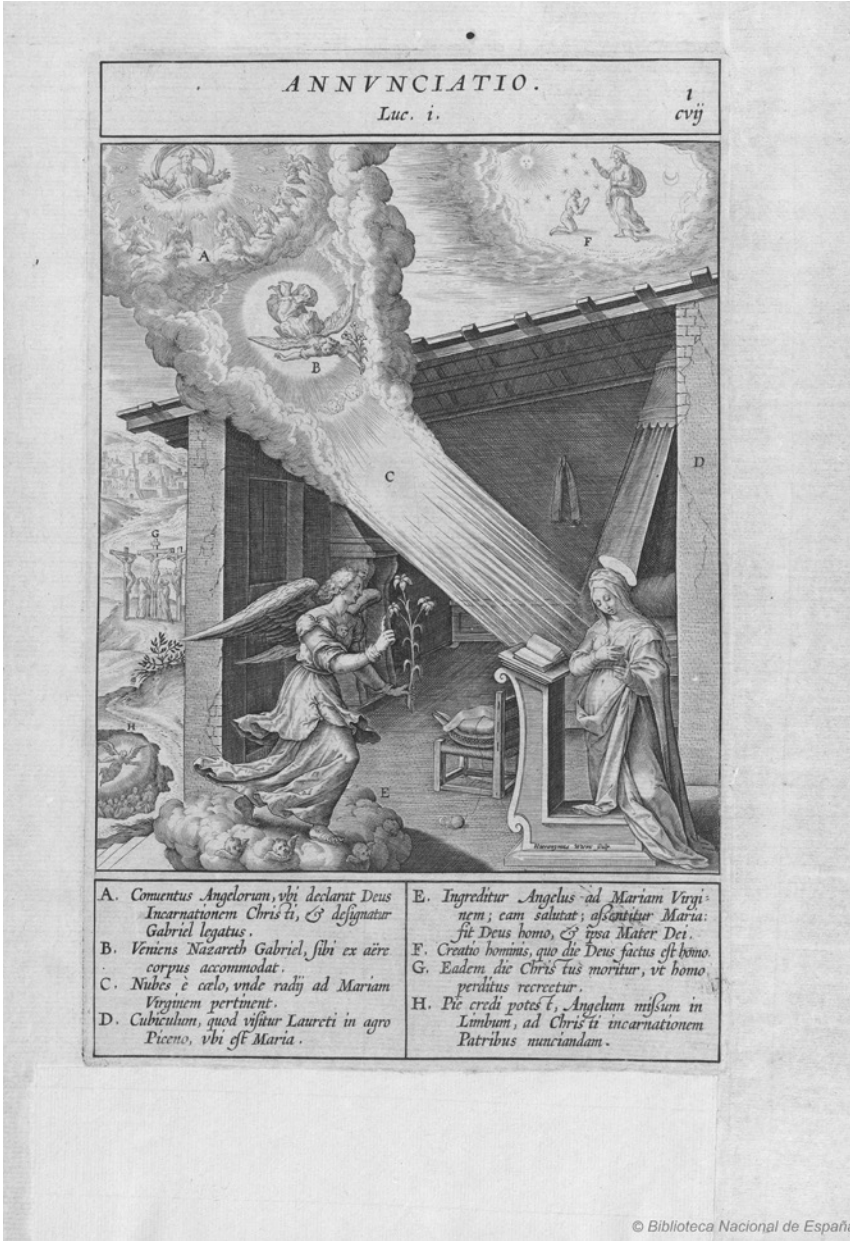


FIGURE 16.5 *Hieronymus Wierix after Bernardo Passeri, The Annunciation. In Jerónimo Nadal, Evangelicae historiae imagines: ex ordine Euangeliorum quae toto anno in Missae sacrificio recitantur, in ordinem temporis vitae Christi digestae (Antwerp, Societas Jesu: 1593) 1. Engraving. Washington, DC, The National Gallery of Art.*

IMAGE © THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART.

spatial and temporal dissonance that underscore the scene's status as a mediating sign (*signum*), or a prompt for meditation, rather than a phenomenon directly offered for contemplation as such.⁴⁵

These visual structures can be even better understood by recourse to the words of another Jesuit theorist, Jacob Masen, who emphasizes the essential function of emblems as 'figured images' ('imagines figuratae') that use tropes to represent phenomena different from themselves.⁴⁶ The same definition is easily applicable to Vermeer's approach to images in his *Allegory of Faith*.⁴⁷ Nor is this meditative function restricted to the disposition of iconographic elements. The formal refinement of the painting fits in with another Jesuit commonplace: that beautifully crafted images refresh and stimulate the eye just as fine verses delight the soul.⁴⁸ As Jacobus Ximenez emphasizes in his preface to the 1595 Antwerp edition of Nadal's *Evangelicae historiae imagines*, 'the elegance and beauty of workmanship together with the greatest sanctity and excellence of theme, conjoined as well with [the greatest] piety of subject, should urge all to study and reflection by means of assiduous meditation'.⁴⁹ Underscoring the importance of images within the meditative scheme, Ximenez also notes that '[...] it was altogether necessary that several most excellent artificers apply themselves to so exceptional a task in order that the image of those very gospels be new and seem to draw breath'.⁵⁰

45 On this curious effect of verisimilar artifice, see Melion, "The Art of Vision" 67, with reference to Nadal, *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* (Antwerp, Martinus Nutius: 1595) 38. Cf. Melion W.S., "Artifice, Memory, and *Reformatio* in Hieronymus Natalis's *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia*", *Renaissance and Reformation* 22,3 (1998) 15–34, for a particularly focused discussion of the way in which these images become steps in one's spiritual itinerary and reform. Also see Melion W.S., "Parabolic Analogy and Spiritual Discernment in Jerónimo Nadal's *Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia* of 1595", in Stelling L. – Hendrix H. – Richardson T. (eds.), *The Turn of the Soul: Representations of Religious Conversion in Early Modern Art and Literature*, Intersections: Interdisciplinary Studies in early Modern Culture 23 (Leiden – Boston: 2012) 299–339.

46 Dimler G.R., S.J., "Jacob Masen's Critique of the *Imago Primi Saeculi*", in Manning J. – Vaeck M. van (eds.), *The Jesuits and the Emblem Tradition: Selected Papers of the Leuven International Emblem Conference, 18–23 August, 1996* (Turnhout: 1999) 279–295.

47 Ibid. 279. Cf. Ripa's "Proemio", *Iconologia* 8, in which 'imagini' are defined as 'figures made in order to express things different from what we see with our eyes'.

48 On this, see Griffin, "Enigmas" 23, with reference to Jacobus Pontanus, one of the first major theorists of emblems among the Jesuits.

49 Melion, "The Art of Vision" 605, citing Jacobus Ximenez's dedicatory preface to the 1595 edition of Nadal's *Adnotationes et meditationes*, fol. 2v.

50 Ibid.

Vermeer's renown as a *fijnschilder* during his lifetime made his paintings especially desirable among amateurs. As an artist who seems to have painted very little on speculation, and whose stylistic refinement and fascination with detail bespeak a highly premeditated approach to painting, he would have been the perfect choice for clients seeking a painting that could provide an effective 'mnemonic armature' for a spiritual itinerary.⁵¹ The last phrase, which I am borrowing from one of Walter Melion's seminal analyses of Nadal's *Evangelicae historiae imagines*, leads into another crucial point about the modality of meditation encouraged by Jesuit authors and emblem theorists. As Melion has observed, the images within these printed templates accord with precepts on artificial memory codified in ancient rhetorical treatises such as *Ad Herennium*, as well as with Aristotle's ideas on recollection as a considered order linking a series of places.⁵²

One should not overlook the importance of this idea for the emblematic culture in general. As Dirck Pers puts it in the preface to the 1644 Dutch version of Ripa's manual: '[...] the working images of the mind serve preachers and orators as a reminder to impress the image of a particular virtue or vice in their memory, and with their help, to analyze it and expand upon it with decorative elaborations'.⁵³ What distinguishes the Jesuit image theorists is the degree of importance accorded to these premises—especially within the framework of spiritual exercises.

Allegorical Difference

Although the duality of things and signs characterizes Vermeer's oeuvre in general, none of his other compositions discloses this two-fold structure in such a pointedly rhetorical manner. One can compare it to any number of his domestic allegories to see this difference. In *A Woman at a Window* from Dresden, the symbolic level of meaning is imperceptibly blended with the verisimilar. The young lady lost in contemplation of a love letter seems at first sight entirely unselfconscious, because her reflection in the window is so natural and

51 Ibid. 605.

52 Ibid. 605–606. Cf. Melion, *Parabolic Analogy* 313–314, about the purposeful difficulty of discerning the right sequence from one image to another in some of Nadal's templates.

53 Ripa, *Iconologia*, 8: '[...] Sal den Predikheeren en Reedenaers voor een locale of plaatselijke memorie dienen, om een beeld van deugd of ondeugd, in hunne gedachte te drucken, en datselve na dese deelen te ontleeden, en met cierlijke ummewegen uyt te breyden [...]':

seemingly unmediated. It is only gradually that one begins to recognize within it possible echoes of the *ars/natura* dialectic, of the art theorist Karel van Mander's well-known definition of painting as 'art of reflection' ('reflexy-konst'), or even of the *paragone* between words and images, *pictura* and *poësis*. The curtain drawn before this interior may be a mere enhancement of the privacy of the scene before us, but also a trope for the famous competition between Zeuxis and Parrhasius. Yet all of these levels of meaning are seamlessly folded into an image that continues to persuade (and seduce) through its remarkable illusion of presence.

Another allegory in the guise of a genre scene is the *Berlin Woman with a Pearl Necklace*, which rewards the beholder both as an exquisitely captured moment of lived experience and a *concetto* built around the lady's self-absorption. Once again, Vermeer engages with and undermines existing iconographic codes to open up multiple interpretive pathways. The young woman holding her pearl necklace can be a figure for vanity or insight, for false self-knowledge or true self-reflection, for the beauty of the visible world or the limits of our visual perception.

The two closely related images of a man in his study, known as *The Geographer* and *The Astronomer*, may be both genre scenes and idealized portraits, possibly of the scientist Anthony van Leuwenhoek. They also carry multiple allegorical meanings: active versus contemplative, empirical versus spiritual, reason-based versus faith-based. Here we have another instance in which every phenomenon that can be qualified as accidental can also be related to something larger than itself, whereby the beholder is prompted to follow and reconcile multiple ways of looking and thinking.

Although all of these paintings are essentially meditative, what makes them so different from *Allegory of Faith* is Vermeer's characteristic elusiveness, his refusal to define the border between the real and the metaphorical. The critics' discomfort with the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* results precisely from the absence of this equivocation between objects as material facts and objects as symbols. For all of the artist's formal virtuosity, each element within this composition is imprinted upon the beholder's mind as a skillfully wrought piece of a conceptual mosaic. In other words, the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* is not merely a meditative painting, but a painting about the art of meditation.

Similar to the mnemonic templates from Jesuit meditative treatises and manuals, Vermeer's composition presents the beholder with a set of figured images that enable a mental peregrination towards the idea of faith itself. At the highest point of this itinerary is the reflective orb hanging from the beamed ceiling of the room. As the eye travels downward, it reaches its symbolic counterpart, the globe beneath the central personification. Though this globe is

certainly symbolic of worldliness, its geographic accuracy may also allude to the human investment in empirical knowledge, which is, in this case, decidedly construed as imperfect without proper spiritual guidance. The absence of that spiritual guidance is emblemized by the apple, another element that bridges distinct realms: the carpet of Faith's pedestal, whose floral designs conjure the lushness of Eden, and the cold black stone onto which it has tumbled. This allusion to the original fall is only enhanced as one notices that this apple is no longer whole.⁵⁴

The ultimate point on this downward course is the bleeding snake crushed by the rock of the Church. The rhetorical contrast between this embodiment of vanquished evil and the fragile and barely visible globe suspended above would have surely been grasped by those who had read the preface to the 1644 edition of *Iconologia*, where Pers echoed the words from *Rhetorica ad Herennium* about the mnemonic power of images possessing exceptional beauty or ugliness.⁵⁵ The same precepts inform the works of the Jesuit theorist Jacob Masen concerning the different ways in which images can convey abstract ideas. As he explains, one can either use metaphors that are based on the similarity between an object ('res significans') and its signifying function ('res significata'), or emphasize the difference between the two to create an enthymeme, where the form functions as a 'thesis ('protasis') while its meaning is an 'conclusion' ('apodosis').⁵⁶ He adds, in an echo of numerous earlier rhetoricians, that the similarity between the sign and its significance depends on proportion and allusion as the main 'sources' ('fontes') of invention; their dissimilarity, on the other hand, issues from the respective counter-tropes of opposition and alienation.⁵⁷

While most of the elements within the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* relate to one another through the tropes of proportion and allusion, its central figure appears closer to an enthymematic argument by virtue of being able to encompass both the Magdalene at the moment of her abandonment of worldly riches and the Virgin Mary herself.⁵⁸ This dual identity is supported by a number of

54 Careful observation of the upper rim of the apple clearly shows that it has been bitten into.

55 On this, see the comments of the Jochen Becker in the introduction to the facsimile reprint of Ripa, *Iconologia* 12, with reference to *Rhetorica ad Herennium* III:22, 27.

56 On Masen's image theory, see Dimler G.R., S.J., "Jakob Masen's *Imago Figurata*: From Theory to Practice", *Emblematica* 6 (1992) 283–306.

57 Dimler, "Jacob Masen's Critique" 280.

58 See Hedquist, "The Real Presence" 342–357.

attributes, the most complex of which are her pearls.⁵⁹ As such emblem writers as Jacob Cats observed, these most precious of nature's creations could lose their purity if exposed to caustic liquids—a *topos* that comes to mind as one contemplates Vermeer's graphic representation of the venomous blood that soils the marble floor of the room.⁶⁰ What affirms their purity here, or even their status as the pearl of great price, is that they are worn by the Magdalene *at the moment* of her transformation.⁶¹ This recognition also allows us to see her as the 'maris stella' that leads to conversion—or as the bodying forth of this visual sermon's larger theme.

Vermeer's conflation of Ripa's personifications of Faith with Mary/Magdalene is amplified by his choice of the Crucifixion as the fulfilment of the test of faith prefigured in Abraham's Sacrifice of Isaac. To recall Hedquist again, by obscuring the Magdalene painted in the original composition by Jordaens with the figure of Faith, the artist effectively brought the penitent saint to life.⁶² This transformation from an image into a living presence certainly gains an added significance within the framework of conversion. Just as the Crucifixion is re-enacted in the Eucharist, symbolized by the altar-like objects on the table, the Magdalene is literally and metaphorically transfigured into her counterpart, the Virgin Mary. Fused into a single personification, this new Mary focuses her eyes on the transparent orb, in an expression of unwavering devotion that betokens her reliance on reflection as a mode of knowing. For those who could trace this fragile and precariously suspended orb to Hesius's emblem, this gesture might also recall its motto, 'Modicae fidei, quare dubitasti', the words spoken by Christ when he rescues Peter from drowning while chastising him for disbelief.⁶³ This idea is reiterated in the *explicatio* of Hesius' emblem, where we read that just as the small orb can reflect everything around it, the mind

59 De Jongh, "Pearls of Virtue" 75ff.

60 Jacob Cats, *Houwelick* (Middelburgh, Jan Pietersz. vande Venne: 1625) 143, as cited in De Jongh, "Pearls of Virtue" 88: 'A most delicious shine this jewel will emit/ If no acidic juice is overturned on it / But should it be attacked by caustic flow/ The loveliest of pearls will lose its erstwhile glow'.

61 I am referring to the famous parable of the merchant who sells his riches upon discovering the pearl of great price, in *Matthew* 13:45–46. Good parallels between this figure and images of Jesuit devotion include Boetius à Bolswert, *St. John Berchmans*, c. 1630, copper engraving, and Schelte à Bolswert, *St. Stanislas Kostka*, c. 1650, copper engraving; see Knipping, *Iconography* pl. 145 & 147.

62 Hedquist, "The Real Presence" 343 ff.

63 *Matthew* 14:31: 'O you of little faith, why did you doubt?'.

illuminated by faith extends even beyond the universe ('Hac mente nihil est amplius').⁶⁴

Even without the memory of this admonition, the fragile, transparent globe hanging by a blue (heavenly) ribbon suggests the impossibility of attaining knowledge unless one conquers all doubts concerning the divine *lux* captured within its reflections. As fragmentary and unreliable as the patterns of the curtain at the threshold of the image, these reflections remind us again of the Pauline perspective on the human condition as an optical labyrinth into which only faith can cast a clarifying light.

The Evangelist, the Painter, and the Beholder

By its closer proximity to the picture plane than the figure of Faith herself, this orb also foregrounds the physical process of reflection whereby everything in this dimly lit interior becomes visible and representable. Like transparent globes in still life paintings on the theme of *vanitas*, which often carry a reflection of the painter in his studio, it is suspended directly above John the Evangelist (who is pointing to the Crucifixion), possibly to draw our attention to Johannes the painter, the keeper of the hermeneutic key to the event we behold.⁶⁵

As if to ensure that we catch this analogy, the artist hints at the evangelist's cloak by including a tiny, nondescript splotch of red pigment in the lower section of the orb. In some ways, this globule is another two-fold metaphor—for the shadowy reality we inhabit and Vermeer's artistry at capturing these shadows (*reflexy-const*).⁶⁶ In a characteristically indirect manner, the artist

64 Hesius, *Emblemata sacra* 88–89: '*Capit quod non capit*: Minimo exhiberi maximus potest mundus: / Pila parva caelos claudit intus immensos / Capitque quod non concipit. Satis magna est, / Licet esse nobis mens putetur exilis, / Si sit Deo fidelis: hanc nihil maius, / Hac mente nihil est amplius; satis numquam / de mente tanta sentit ille qui credit, / Mens maior orbe maximo quod humana est'. See De Jongh, "Pearls of Virtue" 73–74: 'The vast universe can be shown in something small / A small globe encompasses endless skies / And captures what it cannot hold. Our mind is large enough / Though people think it small. / If only I believe in God, nothing can be larger than that mind/ Nothing broader than that mind; never can he who believes / Appreciate the greatness of this mind. / The mind is larger than the largest sphere because it is human'.

65 On the possible allusion to Vermeer in the figure of Johannes Evangelistus, see Arasse, *Vermeer: Faith* 344–346.

66 I am grateful to Walter Melion for suggesting that the reflections within the transparent orb may allude to Vermeer as a practitioner of *reflexy-const*. For the centrality of this

also suggests that the light that makes this scene visible, and thus paintable, is only a fraction of itself: the window we behold among the reflections within the orb is partially closed.⁶⁷ Every object it illuminates is thus declared as a partially unknown, or perhaps, unknowable.

Ripa's emblems are just as informed by this idea. His Religion is described as a woman whose veiled head symbolizes imperfect human understanding; Catholic Faith, as a figure whose veiled breasts and dark setting stand for the screen between the faithful and their faith, as well as for the difficulty of making visible what is inherently unfathomable and unrepresentable. Even his comment on the darkly lit Fede Christiana Catholica, about the blessed who 'ha[s] not seen, and yet ha[s] believed', can be likened to Vermeer's *Faith*, so transparently unreal in her emphatically material presence.⁶⁸ Seen in this wider context, the darkness of this painted temple becomes a trope for the 'kinds of images' ('res picta') described by the Jesuit Jacob Masen, whose

theory of painting, see Melion W.S., *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon: Karel van Mander's Schilder-Boeck* (Chicago: 1991) 73–77. Cf. Arasse, *Vermeer: Faith*, 344 for the fine observation that the reflection 'points to the painter's presence at the origin of representation'.

67 Arasse, *Vermeer: Faith* 343–344.

68 See Ripa, *Iconologia* 147–148: 'De oude Christenen hebben het Christen Geloof by een Maeghdecken van duyster opsicht uytgebeeldt. [...] Zy is van een duyster opsicht gestelt, om dat de Articulen van't geloof, waer in wy geloven gantsch geene uytblickentheyd hebben, want gelijck Paulus seyt 1 Cor. 13.12, soo sien hier door eene spiegel, in een duyster raedseel. [...] Men kan oock seggen datse gedeckt gaet, want het kleed van't Geloof, als de Godgeleerde seggen, komt slechtlijck door een duyster en gedeckt voorstel voort, te weten door een ontastlijck en onsienlijck voorstel'. The relationship between the 'visible' and the 'invisible' is thematized throughout Hesius's treatise. Thus "Emblem 2: *Videt quod non videt*", shows the winged soul reflecting upon its shadow, with a motto from *Hebrews* 11: 'Fides sperandarum substantia rerum, argumentum non apparetium' ('Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen'); see Hesius, *Emblemata sacra* 24–25. Cf. Ripa, *Iconologia*, 172: 'Waer over Christus tot Thomas seyt Ioan. xx: "Saligh zijne die niet sien en doch geloven [...]". [...] het gesichte wort haer bedeckt, om dat de Menschen, door de Religie, op God sien, gelijck S. Paulus seyt, door een Spiegel in een doncker Raedseel, wesende dieselve verbonden aen de lichaemjilcke sinnen, en overmits de Religie altijt bedeckt is geweest, soo isse onderhouden, door mysterien en geheymnissen, 't welck zijn figures, gebruycken en ceremonien, als ofte onder verscheyden kleederen verborgen waere'. This also reinforces Knipping's observation, in *Iconography* 1 28, that Vermeer's sphere alludes to the famous passage in 1 *Corinthians* 13:12 about the human inability to see, except through a glass, darkly.

symbolic structure is key to their capacity to transfer a meaning from one 'intelligent being' ('res intelligens') to another.⁶⁹

Standing beneath the transparent sphere, symbolic of the mind's capacity to grasp what it cannot hold (cf. Hesius's "Capit quod non capit"), the evangelist Johannes continues to point at the crucified Christ in the painting within the painting. Faith qua Magdalene qua Mary continues to gaze at the reflections of the visible world. The red dot within those reflections—a shadow of the pointing gesture of John the Evangelist—continues to remind us of Johannes the painter, his devotion to his craft, *and* his implicit presence as an interpreter of this allegory.

Nonetheless, the only agent who can turn this painted artifice into a virtual 'house of prayer' is the viewer/addressee of this narrative of spiritual conversion. As if to make sure we do not miss this point, Vermeer directs our gaze toward a seemingly insignificant female form at the base of the cross in the painting within the painting. Set at the veritable vanishing point of the larger composition, she becomes the most direct counterpart to the *Allegory of Faith's* beholder.⁷⁰ Her pensive look and gesture perhaps suggest spiritual dejection, but the manner in which her arm becomes mirrored in reverse in the devout gesture of Mary/Magdalene reinforces the idea of redemption as a central message of this allegory. Ultimately, this mirroring between the beholder and the unidentified figure in the painting within the painting also allows us to come back full circle to the place where we began: the empty chair with its intensely blue cushion, a device that, even while inviting us to be seated, reminds us of an absence—the absence of the original meditant, the picture's painter, Vermeer.

Conclusion

To sum up, the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith* foregrounds the meditative process of intensive viewing as an instrument of understanding. Rather than representing a mirror of the real, it invites us to enter an emphatically imaginary

69 For Masen, the main difference between emblem and symbol is that in the emblem, the *res picta* relates the characteristics of one *res intelligens* (intelligent being) to another. See Masen Jacob, *Speculum imaginum veritatis occulae* (Cologne, Sumptibus Viduae & Haeredum Joannis Antonii Kinchii: 1644) 651, 656; discussed in Dimler, "Jacob Masen's Critique" 280.

70 I wish to thank Molly Harrington for discussing with me the placement of this female figure at the vanishing point of the larger painting.

interior, a kind of thought-space, or a room of one's consciousness. Unlike Vermeer's 'private' allegories, in which the symbolic is counteracted by the tremendous psychological presence of characters-as-personifications, in the *Allegory of the Catholic Faith*, the gap between the real and the metaphorical underscores the role of the meditative process in enabling the passage from what we can know through our senses, to that which we can only reach through the act of faith.

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PART 6

Personifying Charity



Personifications of Caritas as Reflexive Figures

Caecilie Weissert

In the center of a painting attributed to Lambert Lombard we see a seated woman, almost life-size, wearing a red gown [Fig. 17.1].¹ She is surrounded by eight naked children who offer her fruits and flowers, caress her lovingly or tussle playfully with one another. This is no everyday family idyll, but rather, a personification of Caritas, who bodies forth the eponymous theological virtue.² She has been extracted from the triad of theological virtues and presented frontally as a beautiful, nearly life-size, fashionably yet classically attired woman. Within the traditional representation of the virtues she is invested with a special status, in both formal and contextual terms.

Before the 1540s, personification rarely appeared in the medium of the panel painting.³ Around this time, however, this type of subject gained ground among elite, educated patrons, for whom it fulfilled not only a cognitive function but also a phenomenological one, exercising a rhetorical effect on the beholder by aesthetic and emotional means. Here I want to suggest that the

- 1 Lambert Lombard (attr.), *Caritas with Children*, c. 1560). Panel, 114.5 × 92 cm. Hermitage, Saint Petersburg. Due to a signature in the lower left-hand corner, the painting has often been attributed to the painter Lambert Lombard of Liège. Hessel Miedema, in Karel van Mander, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters*, 6 vols. (Doornspijk: 1996) III, 10, doubts the authenticity of the signature. The composition also exists in the form of a print showing Caritas seated beneath a raised curtain, in front of a ruin; this print is signed below left: 'Lambert. Lom. Inue. / L.S.' Cf. the copy in the British Museum, where the print is attributed to Lambert Suavius, after a drawing by Lambert Lombard. The motive was also very popular in the circle of Vincent Sellaer. Cf. the RKD image database.
- 2 Cf. the painting by Ambrosius Benson, now lost, formerly in Berlin, which depicts a shield placed at the feet of a group of figures identified in the accompanying inscription as Caritas (Benson, *Caritas with Three Children*, 1495. Panel, 86 × 64 cm, ex-Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Gemäldegalerie). Also cf. the middle panel of the triptych by Maarten van Heemskerck showing the three theological virtues; Caritas appears as a female figure surrounded by children (Van Heemskerck, *Caritas*, c. 1540, panel, 71.5 × 36.5 cm. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna). On this triptych, see Grosshans R., *Maerten van Heemskerck. Die Gemälde* (Berlin: 1980) 162–163.
- 3 On the history of the personification of Caritas up to the fifteenth century, see Freyhan R., "The Evolution of the Caritas Figure in the thirteenth and fourteenth Centuries", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 11 (1948) 68–86.



FIGURE 17.1 *Lambert Lombard (attr.), Caritas with Children (c. 1560). Panel, 114.5 × 92 cm. St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum.*

IMAGE © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM.

PHOTO BY SVETLANA SUETOVA.

aesthetic illusion, designed to pique the beholder's interest and offer a source of delight, even while refusing to unsettle or unduly captivate him, is a precondition for cognitive engagement with the topic of charity and the concepts and expectations generated by it. In my view, the relationship between visual description and abstraction is constitutive for the forms and functions of personification. To justify these claims, I shall endeavor to answer three questions: How was the figure of personification traditionally understood, and to

what extent did painters subscribe to this tradition? Are Caritas paintings topical, that is, do they incorporate motifs specific to their time and place? What do the answers to questions one and two allow us to infer about the way artists went about the task of devising personifications? I shall base my argument on four paintings that depict the personification Caritas [Figs. 17.1–4]. Although they are compositionally similar, they differ markedly in many other respects. These differences resulted from differing conceptions of the form and function of personification, as a brief preliminary discussion of the four examples will serve to indicate.

The Paintings

In the painting attributed to Lombard, the bare-footed figure of Caritas sits in a slightly elevated position before a landscape panorama [Fig. 17.1]. A greenish-brown veil is draped over her shoulders and flows down to the ground; a red ribbon, attached to the veilding wound into her hair. Two boys stand on her lap: one of them affectionately caresses Caritas and, more than this, makes ready to kiss her; the other one leans toward a boy hurrying into the scene to offer a bowl full of fruit. Below him, another boy leans against Caritas' leg, partly shrouded by her drapery, and sits gazing up from his shadowy position. At right, a fifth boy approaches, carrying a small bouquet of flowers with carnations and pansies. His movement is arrested by a boy who holds him tightly, having clasped him from behind; one of the boy's hands is caught in the folds of Caritas's garment. At her feet, in the center of the picture, two boys fight with one another: the one in front grasps the boy behind him, impeding his presentation of a cluster of strawberries to Caritas. In contrast to the lively children, Caritas appears withdrawn, her expression melancholy, head slightly tilted, eyes lowered, the mere hint of a smile hovering on her lips. She seems merely to tolerate the antics of the children around her, rather than actively interacting with, let alone guiding, them. Despite her frontal posture, she establishes no direct contact with the viewer, and neither do the boys. The reduced colour scheme of muted red, brown and green hues enhances the melancholic impression given by the ensemble.

The personification's gaze in the painting by Frans Floris—our second example—focuses inward rather than appealing directly to the beholder [Fig. 17.2].⁴ Floris portrays her as a nude figure half sitting, half leaning in a

4 Frans Floris, *Caritas with Children*, ca. 1560, panel, 156 × 107 cm. Saint Petersburg, Hermitage. Signed with the monogram 'FFF. ET IV' ('F. Floris fecit et invenit'), inv. no. 3302.



FIGURE 17.2 *Frans Floris, Caritas with Children (c. 1560). Panel, 156 × 107 cm. St. Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum.*

IMAGE © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM. PHOTO BY SVETLANA SUETOVA.

frontal position, within a majestic alcove, against a dark background. Her pudenda are veiled by two finely spun cloths—her only attire. Three boys frame her laterally so as not to block the view of her body. The youngest one clasps her neck adoringly. With his other hand he grasps her chin in an attempt

to secure her attention; moreover, he appears poised to draw her face to his and kiss her on the mouth. Like Lombard, Floris depicts Caritas as slightly impassive or even detached; she responds actively to none of the boys. Although she embraces two of them, she pays complete attention to neither. Floris' version of personified Charity is less playful than Lombard's: even though she is shown nude, her attitude is more reserved, and her lowered gaze enhances the effect of emotional restraint that characterizes her relationship to the children.

The two personifications of Caritas attributed to Jan Massys take an intermediate position between Lombard's clothed Caritas and the disrobed one by Floris [Figs. 17.3 & 17.4]. Fashioned from expensive red and brown fabric, the elegant, elaborate robes worn by the nearly life-sized female figure at center seize the viewer's attention, not least because the gown's bodice is cut out around her breasts, laying them bare. They are both concealed and revealed by the translucent gauze veil that softly frames them. In both paintings, Caritas is accompanied by three children of different ages. The version located in Genoa features a boy who climbs onto her lap, one foot resting on the fragment of a column; a flaming vase perches on this makeshift podium [Fig. 17.3].⁵ The boy touches Caritas' bosom while staring at the viewer; the youngest boy lies in her arms, sucking his index finger. The second version positions Caritas farther forward, in the foremost plane of the composition [Fig. 17.4].⁶ The children gesture tenderly toward her from the front and both sides.

Traditions and Innovations

The preeminent position of Caritas among the theological virtues is defined in the New Testament, which elevates her in relation to Faith and Hope.⁷ In patristic literature Caritas is ennobled as the mother of all virtues.⁸ She is construed as the bond that connects human beings with God.⁹ She unites the love

5 Jan Massys, *Caritas with Children*, c. 1550–1555, panel, 126 × 93 cm, Palazzo Bianco, Genoa, inv. no. 285.

6 Jan Massys, *Caritas with Children*, c. 1550–1555), panel, 147 × 112.5 cm, Ader-Tajan, Paris. Auctioned in Hôtel George V. on 28 June 1994.

7 In 1 *Corinthians* 13:13 (Revised Standard Version), we read: 'And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love'. Cf. 1 *John* 4:16, who states that without love there can be no other virtues: 'God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them'. See Freyhan, "The Evolution of the Caritas Figure" 68.

8 As Ambrose writes in *In Lucam*, lib. II, for example, 'Caritas est forma et mater virtutum'. Cited in Freyhan, "The Evolution of the Caritas Figure" 68, n. 2.

9 The same is true of Augustine, as noted by Freyhan in *ibid.*



FIGURE 17.3 *Jan Massys, Caritas with Children (c. 1550–1555). Panel, 126 × 93 cm. Genoa, Palazzo Bianco.*

IMAGE © GALLERIA PALAZZO BIANCO.



FIGURE 17.4 *Jan Massys, Caritas with Children (c. 1550–1555). Panel, 147 × 112.5 cm. Ader-Tajan, auctioned in Hôtel George V., 28.6.1994.*

IMAGE © ARCHIVE, INSTITUT FÜR KUNSTGESCHICHTE DER UNIVERSITÄT STUTTGART.

of God (*amor Dei*) with love of one's fellow men (*amor proximi*).¹⁰ For Paul, God's love expresses itself in the self-sacrifice of Christ who sheds his blood for humankind.¹¹ For this reason, Massys and Lombard portray Caritas wearing a red garment [Figs. 17.1, 17.3, & 17.4], and Floris places a red cloth behind her [Fig. 17.2]. Moreover, the fact that Caritas is associated with *igniculus sapientiae*, a form of *lumen mentis*, is significant. In the paintings by Massys and Floris, the flame alludes directly to divine love [Figs. 17.2–3]. The child's kiss is prefigured in the *Song of Solomon*: 'O that you would kiss me with the kisses of your mouth! For your love is better than wine'.¹² Such a kiss or tender embrace is reminiscent of representations of the loving relationship between Mary and Christ [Fig. 17.5]. The pyramidal structure and the closed contours of the figural groups unify them, even while highlighting individual differences; this variety in unity can be understood as a visualization of the doctrine that all Christians are subsumed into the one body of Christ: 'For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ'.¹³ In fact, all four paintings derive compositionally from a celebrated painting of 1518 by Andrea del Sarto. Completed in France for François I and reproduced by the printmaker Jean Mignon in 1544—i.e., shortly before the first versions of Caritas appeared in Antwerp—it became the definitive model for large-scale depictions of the subject in the Low Countries [Fig. 17.6].¹⁴

10 Caritas was closely associated with Misericordia and the six acts of mercy. Two representational traditions evolved from this. The initial focus lay on acts of mercy as expressions of charity. In the mid-thirteenth century a type of picture emerged in Italy which thematized love of God, bodying it forth as a female personification invested with attributes of worldly love. In the Netherlands both traditions were known by the early sixteenth century. Pieter Bruegel, for instance, portrayed Caritas surrounded by the acts of mercy, in a print dated c. 1559; see Philips Galle after Pieter Bruegel, *Caritas*, c. 1559, engraving, 22,2 × 28,9 cm. Inscribed 'CHARITAS' at lower center, the print carries a caption warning that one should not treat others differently than one would wish to be treated oneself. If one is to behave charitably, empathy is required. Cf. Härting U., "De Subventionne Pauperum. Zu Pieter Bruegels Caritas 1559", *Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 47 (1997) 106–123.

11 Cf. *Romans* 5:6–9.

12 Cf. *Song of Solomon* 1:2.

13 New Testament, 1 *Corinthians* 12:12.

14 Andrea del Sarto, *Chastity*, 1518. Canvas (transferred from panel), 185 × 137 cm. Louvre, Paris. Signed on the cartello lower left: 'ANDREAS SARTUS FLORENTINUS ME PINXIT / MDXVIII'. The print by Jean Mignon reverses Del Sarto's painting, resulting in the characteristic tilt of the head to the right. Jean Mignon after Andrea del Sarto, *Caritas*, 1544,



FIGURE 17.5 *Quentin Massys (workshop), Madonna with Cherries (c. 1520). Panel, 0.76 × 0.62 cm. Paris, Darcy Collection.*

IMAGE © ARCHIVE, INSTITUT FÜR KUNSTGESCHICHTE DER
UNIVERSITÄT STUTTGART.

The paintings under discussion share a tendency to emphasize the beauty of the women's bodies, calling attention to their breasts. This recalls St. Bernard's

engraving, 270 × 189 mm. Cf. Zerner H., *Die Schule von Fontainebleau. Das graphische Werk* (Munich: 1969) 48.



FIGURE 17.6 *Jean Mignon after Andrea del Sarto, Caritas (1544). Engraving, 270 × 189 mm.*
IMAGE © THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

emphasis on the importance of desire (*concupiscentia*), which he construes as a necessary step on the way to securing divine love; *caritas*, in his view, would be unthinkable without *cupiditas*.¹⁵ Juan Luis Vives views parental love as a key expression of Caritas; in his much read treatise *De anima et vita*, he states: "There are, however, occasions when something is loved for itself without any consideration of utility to us. This is true and authentic love, such as the love among friends, the best example of which is the love of parents for their children".¹⁶ Examples of Caritas accompanied by children, one of whom she nurses, appeared in Italian art of the early fourteenth century.¹⁷ This motif derives from readings of the *Song of Solomon* that interpret lactating breasts as an allusion to *dilectio Dei et proximi*.¹⁸ Nourishment given in this way also stands for education in the Christian doctrine of love.¹⁹

However, the pictures by Lombard, Floris, and Massys refrain from depicting Caritas's breasts as milk-giving; instead they emphasize their beauty, presenting them as an objects of admiration, fit to be beheld as such. Such praise of the bosom is reminiscent of Clément Marot's poem *Le beau tetin*, and more generally, of the adoration bestowed on beautiful women in love poetry of the French Renaissance, which evolved from courtly love poetry.²⁰ Within this poetic context, delight in visual beauty can indeed lead to the immersive contemplation of heavenly beauty: attention paid to a woman's physical beauty becomes the point of departure for a meditative exercise.²¹ On the other hand, Caritas' nudity, her breasts, more revealed than concealed by a sheer,

15 Freyhan, "The Evolution of the Caritas Figure" 73. Cf. St. Bernard of Clairvaux, *De diligendo Deo*, ed. J.P. Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, vol. 128 (Paris: 1879) 998.

16 Vives Juan Luis, *The Passions of the Soul. The Third Book of De anima et vita*, trans. C.G. Norena (New York – Queenston: 1990) 11.

17 Freyhan, "The Evolution of the Caritas Figure" 83.

18 Cf. Seidel M., "Ubera Matris: Die vielschichtige Bedeutung eines Symbols in der mittelalterlichen Kunst", *Städte Jahrbuch*, N.F. 6 (1977) 41–98, esp. 58ff. For Raphael, the image of Caritas with children can represent both *amor Dei* and *amor proximi*, as the side panels of his Caritas predella from the *Entombment of Christ* of 1507 (Galleria Borghese, Rome) clearly indicate: on the right of Caritas, we see a putto holding divine fire; on the left, we see the same putto holding charitable gifts. The predella is now in the Pinacoteca Vaticana, Rome.

19 Seidel, "Ubera Matris" 59. Cf. for example, St. Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job*, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, vol. 75, ed. J.P. Migne (Paris: 1862) 780.

20 See Schmidt A.-M. (ed.), *Les blasons du corps féminin. Poètes du XVI^e Siècle* (Paris: 1959) 303–360. For Marot's poem, written in 1535, see 331.

21 Giordano M.J., *The Art of Meditation and the French Renaissance Love Lyric: The Poetics of Introspection in Maurice Scève's 'Délie, Object de plus haulte vertu' (1544)* (Toronto: 2010). Also on this topic and for further literature, see Melion W.S., *The Meditative Art: Studies in*



FIGURE 17.7 Vincent Sellaer, *Venus and Amor* (c. 1550). Drawing, 20.4 × 26.2 cm. Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstich-Kabinett.
IMAGE © INSTITUT FÜR KUNSTGESCHICHTE DER UNIVERSITÄT STUTTGART.

translucent veil, her refined clothing, and ornamental headgear bring to mind pictorial images of Venus with Amor. Another parallel is the association of Venus and Amor with the flame, the symbol of profane love, as popularized in the *Roman de la Rose*.²² The version by Frans Floris, in particular, makes playful, albeit subtle allusion to famous lovers of antiquity and to the iconography of Venus, through motifs such as the luxurious bed and the *vinculum amoris*—the chain of love—which attaches to two of the boys, as well as the pendant lamp. The axis anchored below and above by the cat and the lamp may be an allusion to the connection between base ‘animal’ desire and divine love, the former being, in St. Bernard’s sense, a step on the way to the latter [Figs. 17.7 & 17.8].²³

the Northern Devotional Print, 1550–1625, Early Modern Catholicism and the Visual Arts 1 (Philadelphia: 2009).

22 Freyhan, “The Evolution of the Caritas Figure” 75.

23 Floris’ Caritas repeats almost exactly the figure of Eve in his *Adam and Eve* of 1560 (Palazzo Pitti, Florence).



FIGURE 17.8 *Vincent Sellaer, Jupiter and Antiope (c. 1535–1545). Panel, 140 × 103 cm. Paris, Louvre, R.F. 1981–45.*

IMAGE © RMN-GRAND PALAIS (MUSÉE DU LOUVRE)/
JEAN-GILLES BERIZZI.

It should therefore come as no surprise to discover that Caritas combines sacred and profane elements, taken respectively from Marian and Venusian iconography.

But it makes a difference—ontological and phenomenological—whether we behold a representation of Mary, of a mythological lover taken from the

antique or of a personification such as Caritas. Caritas is neither an historical nor mythological figure. Her appearance, howsoever various or concrete, always serves to body forth her identity as a depicted virtue, the nature and scope of which can be evoked but never fully encompassed representationally. Her individual appearance is designed to invite consideration of the virtue and, in this sense, to incite intellectual engagement. Such engagement is decisively mediated by the figure's sensuous qualities that have the power to seize the viewer's interest and attention, and these qualities in turn hinge on the illusion of her physical presence.

All the examples cited above strive to enhance this illusory effect, making Caritas appear intensely present: in the painting attributed to Lombard, for instance, the graduated composition integrates the figures, subsuming them into a notional pyramid within which they are unified or, better, intertwined; their interactions are thus made to seem all the more lively, intimate, and persuasive [Fig. 17.1]. Caritas provides the firm foundation for the playful boys who coalesce around her. This substantive impression is further heightened by the two large stone pedestals that function as a framing device: for example, the richly ornamented Corinthian base rising above a high, stepped podium, augments the illusion that we are dealing with solid forms firmly anchored within the space they occupy. The strong contrasts of light and dark, sharply cast shadows and carefully modulated hues heighten the plasticity of both the pedestals and the figures, making the entire grouping appear substantial and voluminous. Moreover, the spatial complexity of the bowl of fruit, the intricate play of legs and the elaborate space—tiered in front, with steps and pedestals—magnify the effect of spatial extension. The corporeal presence of the bodies is emphasized by their nudity and mobility. Caritas's body clearly projects through her softly pendant, belted drapery; the play of highlights further amplifies the body's presence, as also does the boy who pulls at her robe and places his foot on her crotch.

In Floris' version, the female figure once again dominates the center of the composition [Fig. 17.2]. The standing boy at right and the golden border on the alcove's dark curtain counterbalance the two boys at left, one of whom stands above the other; the interaction among these elements accentuates the spatial effect of the picture as a whole. So too do the boys' complex poses, such as that of the boy below, who leans on the chair beside Caritas. Verisimilar details likewise contribute to the effect of vivid presence—the cat poised on the chair, the two high pillows, still indented from use, next to the smaller boy, the lit lamp dangling from above, the fine, diaphanous veil attached to a tiara, whence it flutters downward and sinuously entwines the boys, binding them to Caritas. Floris' utilizes a relatively subdued palette that effectively models forms: a

triad of yellowish flesh tones, red and orange for the fabrics, brownish-black for the cat and the surroundings. The system of illumination that selectively intensifies—one is tempted to say ‘solidifies’—into highlights (on the lamp, the tiara, the ornamental chains worn by the boys) and elsewhere diffuses into the alcove’s dark depths, further strengthens the convincing illusion of presence.

In all the examples physical contact plays an important role. The woman maternally embraces the children, their arms intertwining. The children try tenderly to embrace the woman, caressing her arms, her cheeks, her neck, her breasts. All four women are epitomes of feminine beauty, as codified in sixteenth-century treatises on love: they sport subtly curved eyebrows and lips, perfectly round and flawlessly white necks, slender fingers that gradually taper, small slightly pursed mouths and reddish nipples, lips and cheeks.²⁴ Caritas is shown as exquisitely restrained, solemn and patient, more passive than active, in contrast with the lively boys around her.

Contemporary Aspects

The representation of the three theological virtues traditionally belonged in the public space of churches and municipal buildings. This was not the case, however, for the large-scale depictions of Caritas without her sister virtues. Property inventories suggest that this motif was displayed in the private rooms of upper-class citizens. The inventory of Jan Noirot, whose desperate financial situation caused him to flee house and home in 1572, lists such a painting: ‘In the bedroom behind the buffet: First a painted panel of Charity with a naked child [...]’ (‘Inde slaepcamer achter te comptoir: Inden iersten enn schilderyn berct[?] van charitas met eene naecte kinderken [...]').²⁵ As the Master of the Antwerp Mint, Noirot occupied an eminent position in the municipal life of Antwerp, possessing a select collection of what was at that time modern art, including five peasant scenes by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. The inventory of moveable property owned by the merchant Vincent Laureysz. of Middelburg lists a *Caritas* as well, which hung in the kitchen: ‘a panel with Charity’ (‘een bart van Caritas’). The kitchen was lavishly adorned with paintings, including a *Three Kings*, a *Last Supper*, an *Adam and Eve*, a *Rustic Dance* and a *Maria*

24 Matthews Grieco S.F., “Körper, äußere Erscheinung und Sexualität”, in Duby G. – Perrot M. (series eds.), *Geschichte der Frau*, vol. 3: *Frühe Neuzeit*, ed. A. Farge – N. Zemon Davis (Frankfurt am Main: 1994) 60–101, esp. 73–75.

25 Cited in Goldstein C., *Pieter Bruegel and the Culture of the Early Modern Dinner Party* (Burlington: 2013) 69 n. 74.

Magdalena.²⁶ The fish merchant Goedert Hanegreeff of Deventer and the consul of Spanish merchants Jan de Hiniosa of Middelburg both owned a 'a panel with love' ('bart van de liefde').²⁷ These might well have been personifications of Caritas as well.²⁸

Why would such purchasers or commissioners, all of whom belonged to the upper-middle class of urban society, take an interest in almost life-size personifications of the theological virtue of love? This would have had something to do with pictorial form and function, of course: these are all ambitious compositions that invite the viewer to meditate on beauty, love and religious faith. But it seems to me that the subject, as formulated in these pictures, also responds to specific and identifiable socio-cultural values having to do with marriage. Erasmus, for example, thematizes these values in portraying the instruction of a wife by her attentive husband as an example of matrimonial charity.²⁹

In the paintings studied here the woman is presented in relation to children in a local, even domestic setting. The version attributed to Lombard situates the figures locally [Fig. 17.1]: the beholder's gaze glides past two willowy trees at left, then moves into the background where a castle rises from a high, rocky massif; the castle corresponds to a windmill poised on a green hill at right. These local motifs imply that the Caritas group has reference to the Low Countries. In the painting by Massys, Caritas sits in front of a stone compound that resembles the veranda of a suburban villa or the gateway to the city visible in the right background [Fig. 17.3]. The version auctioned in Paris likewise includes an urban scene: one sees at left a town square with a well, a couple

26 See Gelder H.A.E. van, *Gegevens betreffende roerend en onroerend bezit in de Nederlanden in de 16^e eeuw*, 2 vols. (The Hague: 1972–1973) 1, 400, no. 79: "R.A. Zeeland, Arch. Graf. Officiëren, no. 17d. 'In de keuken: een taeffereel van Drye Koninghen; [...] – een bart van 't Aventmael; – een bart van Caritas; – een bart van Adam ende Eva; – een bardeken van den boerendans; – een bart van Magdaleen; [...]'.
 27 On Goedert Hanegreeff, see Van Gelder, *Gegevens* 459, no. 98. The goods were confiscated in 1566, and the panel was sold together with other paintings on 26 May 1567. On Jan de Hiniosa, see Van Gelder, *Gegevens* 578 (Bijlage C): 'Bij Jan de Hiniosa, [...] op de voorcamere boven: een bart van Adam ende Eva, een taeffereel van de Dry Coninghen, een bart van de Liefde'.

28 In the comedy *De Bruijt Christi* by Dirk Volckertszoon Coornhert, the figure of Caritas ('Charitas') is equated with Love ('Liefde'). Cf. Coornhert Dirck Volckertszoon, *Het Roerspel en de Comedies van Coornhert*, ed. P. van der Meulen (Leiden: 1955) 224.
 29 Erasmus Desiderius, "Christiani Matrimonii Institutio", in idem, *Opera omnia*, ed. Ioannes Clericus, vol. 5 (Leiden, Petri van der Aa: 1704; reprint Hildesheim: 1962) 615–724, col. 690F: 'Jam institutio conjugis ut plurimum adfert momenti ad conglutinandam caritatem, ita magna ex parte viris in manu est'.

and a peacock; at right a coastal city with a high church tower rising from behind a tree [Fig. 17.4]. Floris places Caritas in a domestic interior, beside a bed. [Fig. 17.2].

Floris and Massys differentiate the boys by age, thus intimating that the female figure is a mother keeping watch over her children.³⁰ Her status as a kind of maternal Venus recalls the two emblems published by Hadrianus Junius in 1565, which address the ideal qualities and virtues of women [Fig. 17.9].³¹ According to Emblem L. ("Uxoriae virtutes"), the three most important endowments of a woman are: 'to wit: staying at home to take care of the household [...]; next, guardianship of the wealth and goods accrued by the labours of her husband; and last, control over her tongue'.³² Emblem XII ("Uxoriae dotes") expands on this, adding: 'chaste modesty, constancy of love and caring for her household: these things are fitting in a wife'. This emblem is accompanied by a long hexameter that postulates a close association of Venus to marriage.³³ The Venus figure depicted in the icon of the emblem carries the chains of fidelity and the *flammeum*, the antique veil of a bride and faithful wife, whose color is described as flame-like.³⁴ This corresponds to the shimmering yellowish clothing worn by Caritas in all the paintings under discussion. Junius composed his emblems within a society that defined a married woman's obligations as nuptial fidelity, care for the household but, perhaps most importantly, the bearing and raising of offspring.³⁵

The question as to what qualities and virtues a modern Christian woman should possess had occupied the minds of the educated elite for quite some time, and it played a major role in humanistic and ethical writings. In 1524, Juan Luis Vives published the treatise *De institutione foeminae Christianae* in Antwerp. The book became one of the best-sellers of humanistic educational

30 It was customary for children to be born two to three years apart. See Hufton O., "Arbeit und Familie", in Duby – Perrot, *Geschichte der Frau* 27–59.

31 Junius Hadrianus, *Emblemata* (Antwerp, Christophe Plantin: 1565), Emblem XII ("Uxoriae dotes") and Emblem L ("Uxoriae virtutes").

32 Junius, *Emblemata*, Emblem L: 'Complectitur istud emblema ternas praecipuas uxoris dotes, nimirum residem domi suae operam [...] deinde opum mariti industriae quaesitarum custodiam, postremo linguae continentiam'.

33 Ibid., Emblem XII. In Emblem IV ("Virginem pudicitiae, matronam domus satagere") Minerva exemplifies the virginal state, whereas Venus stands for the modest, faithful and loving wife.

34 On the *flammeum* and its colors, see Oswald R., "Hochzeitsbräuche und Hochzeitsritual", in *Der Neue Pauly*, vol. 5, ed. H. Cancik – H. Schneider (Stuttgart: 1998) cols. 649–656.

35 See Hufton, *Arbeit und Familie* 27–59, particularly the section with the heading "Mutterschaft".

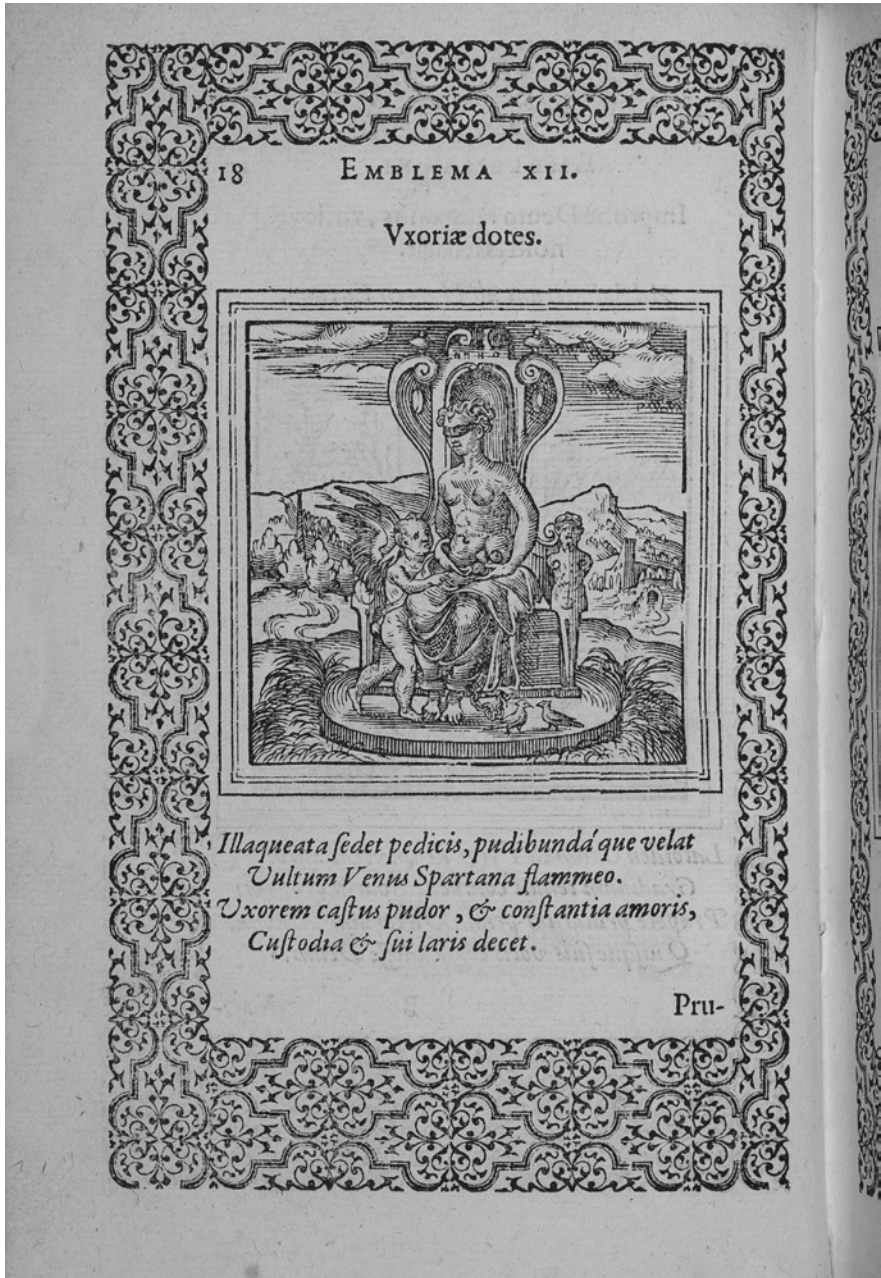


FIGURE 17.9 Gerard Janssen van Kampen – Arnold Nicolai after Geoffroy Ballain – Pieter Huys, woodcut illustration to Hadrianus Junius, *Emblemata* (Antwerp, Christophe Plantin: 1565) 18: “Emblem XII (‘Uxoriar dotes’)”, 165 × 98 mm. IMAGE © WÜRTTEMBERGISCHE LANDESBIBLIOTHEK, STUTTGART.

literature.³⁶ At about the same time Erasmus of Rotterdam published three works that address the question of a wife's education: the extensive moral theological marriage treatise *Institutio Christiani matrimonii* came out in 1526; an epistolary praise of marriage, *Encomium matrimonii*, had already appeared in 1518; and in 1523, the dialogue *Conjugium* followed.³⁷

But what purpose did marriage treatises serve? First of all, they addressed a male audience. They were fuelled by the fear that humankind would die out if virginity were more highly esteemed than marriage.³⁸ In Erasmus's *Encomium*, which can be read as a conversation, i.e., as a reply to the widespread deprecation of women, praise of them becomes praise of marriage.³⁹ Emphasis is placed on the notion that a wife and children bring love into the community, driving away the inhumane condition of loneliness to which a single man is prey. The elderly husband will live on in his offspring who in this sense rejuvenate him.⁴⁰ The literary scholar Katrin Graf has shown that the perfect wife is viewed here as a product of marital Caritas, her character having been moulded by her dutiful husband.⁴¹ After the husband's successful completion of his wife's education, the marriage partners will be able to exchange thoughts on religious topics. Conjugal love strengthened in this way ultimately leads to the begetting of spiritual children. Erasmus refers to such love as the 'new Cupido'.⁴² The Erasmian association between children and

36 Jacobi J., "Juan Luis Vives' 'De institutione feminae Christianae'. Eine humanistische Schrift zur Mädchenerziehung für Europa. Beitrag zum Themenschwerpunkt, Europäische Geschichte – Geschlechtergeschichte", Themenportal Europäische Geschichte (2011), <http://www.europa.clio-online.de/2011/Article=495>. On the propagation of the treatise through vernacular translations, see Brandenburger T. – Graf K. – Thali J., "Die volkssprachlichen Übersetzungen von Juan Luis Vives' Eheschriften 'De institutione feminae christinae' und 'De officio mariti' in der Romania des 16. Jahrhunderts", in Schnell R. (ed.), *Geschlechterbeziehungen und Textfunktionen. Studien zu Eheschriften der Frühen Neuzeit* (Tübingen: 1998) 275–309.

37 See Graf K., "Die Gelehrtenehe als Frauenerziehung", in Schnell, *Geschlechterbeziehung* 233–257.

38 Graf, "Die Gelehrtenehe" 234. Erasmus makes this point on several occasions.

39 See Sloane T., "Rhetorical Education and Two-Sided Argument", in Plett H.F. (ed.), *Renaissance-Rhetorik* (Berlin – New York: 1993) 163–178. For an extensive discussion, see Graf, "Die Gelehrtenehe" 235. Graf emphasizes that the text is addressed to men educated in theology and literature.

40 Ibid., 237; and Erasmus, Desiderius, "Encomium matrimonii", in idem, *Opera Omnia*, vol. 5 (Amsterdam – Oxford: 1975) 333–416, here 406 (col. 270ff).

41 Graf, "Die Gelehrtenehe" 251; see also note 29.

42 Graf, "Die Gelehrtenehe" 252; Erasmus, "Institutio matrimonii" col. 691E–F: Jamque incipiet non solum diligere ut Martium, sed suspicere ut Praeceptiorem, reverevi ut

Cupid perhaps explains why Caritas' boyish children resemble *erotes*; they can also be seen as embodiments of the spiritual ideas engendered by the interaction between husband and wife, and again, as allusions to the rejuvenated man brought forth by their marital interaction.⁴³

In contrast, Erasmus *Conjugium* views the situation from a woman's perspective. This text constitutes a colloquium, a conversation between the 'eloquent' Eulalia and her cantankerous interlocutor Xanthippe. A general pedagogical program ('ad vitam instituendum') is outlined for use in schools.⁴⁴ The chief topic is the animal instincts of men and the licentiousness of husbands, as seen from the perspective of their wives. The reader discovers that Eulalia leads a pleasant life with her husband, for she draws her worldly wisdom from classical literature. In contrast, the uneducated Xanthippe, who 'knows Paul but not Plutarch or Martial', lives in strife with her husband.⁴⁵ Eulalia describes how a woman should guide her husband, tempering him so that he becomes more peaceable, thus allowing the two spouses to lead a more harmonious life together. The husband's vices—'drunkenness' ('gula'); 'gambling' ('luxuria'); 'adultery' ('libido'); and 'irascibility' ('ira')—stand in opposition to the virtues of the educated wife—'pudency, demureness, chastity' ('pudicitia'); patience, forbearance ('patientia'); 'humility' ('humilitas'); and 'prudence, judiciousness, sagacity' ('prudentia')—virtues we can see in the pictures under discussion. Erasmus states that the husband can be made susceptible to improvement through the wife's practical art of 'persuasion' ('persuasio'); the power of female persuasion does not consist in rhetoric or intellect, however, but rather in the deliberate use of her erotic allure. The woman's power issues from the 'belt of Venus' which every wife possesses as a means of keeping her husband's sexuality under control. Beauty of external appearance is also deemed important, as is evident from the way the dialogue begins. Xanthippe praises Eulalia's new gown for its great 'elegance' ('elegantius'), its fabric softer than batiste and its 'lovely crimson colour', characteristics that make Eulalia appear even more beautiful than usual. We are immediately reminded of the attire worn by Caritas in the pictures by Massys [Figs. 17.3–4]. Eulalia, in her conversation

Patrem: au tut Christianius dicam, Deus in marito venerari. Hic novo Cupidini cedit ille vulgaris amor, neque in magna felicitate ponet, quod opera mariti mter facta sit'.

- 43 The oldest child in Heemskerck's painting (see note 2), who clearly displays female sexual characteristics, is an exception; this shows once again that Heemskerck's *Caritas* operates within a different discursive field.
- 44 Graf, "Die Gelehrtenehe" 238. On humanist pedagogy, see Bömer A., *Die lateinischen Schülergespräche der Humanisten* (Amsterdam: 1966).
- 45 Graf, "Die Gelehrtenehe" 242.

with Xanthippe, ultimately recommends the conjugal bed as an instrument of female persuasion and the best remedy for marital problems.⁴⁶ As an educative and cultivating force, female eroticism, if it is exercised judiciously, is licensed within the condition of marriage.⁴⁷

On the one hand, the figure of Caritas in the paintings we have been studying stands for the virtuous, i.e., chaste, faithfully loving and nurturing wife. On the other hand, it stands for her power of seduction, exercised through the senses, and for the refinement and cultivation with which she applies sensuality to the didactic task at hand—influencing her husband's behavior. All four paintings can be seen to focus on the thematic of wifely beauty. Caritas's lowered gaze, her firm yet loose connection to the children, has nothing to do with the power of words but instead with the associative power of visual persuasion. The haptic illusion of tangible presence, of touchable bodies and materials (skin, cloth, jewellery), combined with the subtlety of the painted surface and colours are designed to delight rather than overwhelm the beholder, thereby to reflect upon the erotic topic of uxorial influence. Painted personifications are the reflexive figures whereby conjugal values and meanings directly connected to paintings' male and female viewers are made visible.

Personification

Do we know any contemporary theory directly relevant to the depiction of personifications? In the sixth part of the *Schilder-Boeck* (1604), Van Mander writes about the depiction of gods, hieroglyphs and abstract concepts, so-called *figueren*.⁴⁸ The first of the three discourses treats the guises and attributes of the ancient gods. The second focuses on the meaning and figuration of hieroglyphs, as passed down from pagan antiquity and the Egyptians. It examines the symbolic meaning of animals, celestial bodies such as the sun and stars, body parts such as the tongue and objects such as the compass, crown and mirror. The short third discourse is devoted to the 'personifications rich

46 Ibid., 247. Eulalia's advice originates in Plutarch's *Praecepta coniugalia* 38.

47 On the place of eros within early-modern marriage, see Weber A., *Affektive Liebe als rechte eheliche Liebe in der ehedidaktischen Literatur der frühen Neuzeit* (Frankfurt am Main: 2001).

48 Mander Karel van, *Uytbeeldinghe der Figueren: waer in te sein is, hoe d'Heydenen hun Goden uytghebeeldt, en onderscheyden hebben: hoe d'Egyptische yet beteyckenden met Dieren of anders, en eenighe meeninghen te kennen gaven, wet noch meer omstandigheden*, second edition (Amsterdam, Cornelis Lodewijcksz. van der Passe: 1616) title page.

in meaning' ('sin-rycke uytbeeldingen'). Making reference to Dirk Volckertsz. Coornhert, Van Mander emphasizes that 'in this area everyone is at liberty to use his spirit and ingenuity' ('het staet vry, een yeder zijnen gheest en vernunft hier in te ghebruycken').⁴⁹ He sees the artist's task as consisting in the decorous deployment of such 'sense-giving figurative images' ('sin-gevende ghedaenten der beeldingen').⁵⁰

Van Mander restricts himself to six examples: Peace or Harmony, Fidelity, Friendship, Adventure, Cause and Youth. Peace, Adventure and Cause are depicted as female figures differing in appearance and attributes. To give the reader a better grasp of the subject matter, he refers him to the sixth chapter of his art theoretical poem *Grondt der edel vry schilderconst* (Book 1 of the *Schilder-Boeck*), in which he explores the depiction of affects, emotions and desires.⁵¹ He invokes the dramatic art of theatre, which he construes as a kind of school in which legible expressions may be studied and learned.⁵² Van Mander was himself a playwright directly involved in the theatre of the Netherlandish rhetoricians, in which concepts such as Caritas are presented as 'characters' ('personen').⁵³ The transformation of a concept into a certain type of person defined that person's appearance and actions, which in turn made the content, function and status of the concept visible; furthermore, just as bodies could be mobilized, so concepts could be actively enacted, which is to say that personification could be used to represent mental processes.⁵⁴ The visual artist's task was to transform concepts into persons whose appearance, behavior and emotions were seen to body forth these concepts, inflecting and animating them.⁵⁵ Personifications were analogized to actors who adopt a role

49 Ibid., 120.

50 Ibid., 120.

51 Ibid., 114.

52 Mander Karel van, *Den grondt der edel vry Schilder const*, ed. H. Miedema, 2 vols. (Utrecht: 1973) 1, 158 (chapter 6.6).

53 On the *rederijkers* and their use of personification, see Hummelen W.M.H., *Repertorium van het rederijkersdrama 1500–ca. 1620*. Revised edition 2003, http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/hummo01repe01_02/colofon.htm.

54 Ramakers B., "Die Welt und die drei Begierden im *Rederijker-Drama*", in Meier C. – Ramakers B. – Beyer H. (eds.), *Akteure und Aktionen. Figuren und Handlungstypen im Drama der Frühen Neuzeit*, Symbolische Kommunikation und gesellschaftliche Wertesysteme 23 (Münster 2008) 81–126, 8; and Paxson J.J., *The Poetics of Personification*, Literature, Culture, Theorie 6 (Cambridge: 1994) 69.

55 Ramakers, "Die Welt und die drei Begierden"; Meier C. – Ramakers B., "Akteure und Aktionen im Drama der Frühen Neuzeit. Eine Einführung", in Meier C. – Ramakers B. – Beyer H. (eds.), *Akteure und Aktionen. Figuren und Handlungstypen im Drama der Frühen*

and, in this capacity, put forward arguments that convince both emotionally and intellectually.⁵⁶ Rhetorical source documents usually elucidate personification under the key word *prosopopoeia*, which 'primarily denotes attribution of the capacity for speech and for the production of verbal effects'.⁵⁷ For the visual artist the reference to persona (*prosopon*) in its original meaning of theatrical mask or role is especially apt, for such a device is susceptible to pictorial representation. Seen in this light, the four pictures under discussion can be understood to represent the concept of charity in the form of an enacted persona: Caritas, a young, beautiful, reserved woman, performatively embodies charity, by way of her passively loving relationship to the children around her.

Cicero's discussion of 'personal attributes' ('adtributa personis') in *De inventione* provides another context in which to situate these paintings.⁵⁸ He defines several categories of attribute: 'name' ('nomen'), 'sex' ('sexus'), 'manner of life' ('ratio vitae'), 'fortune' ('fortuna'), 'congenital attributes' ('natura') and 'acquired attributes' ('habitus', such as 'scientia' and 'diligentia'), 'feelings' ('affectiones', such as love, rage, sorrow), 'interests' ('studia'), 'purposes' ('consilia'), 'achievements' ('facta'), 'experiences' ('casus') and 'speeches' ('orationes'). Cicero also suggests dividing personal attributes into three sub-categories: 'moral' ('animus'), 'physical' ('corpus') and 'external' ('extraneae').⁵⁹ If we transfer these categories to the paintings in question, we might describe them as follows: the depicted person's name is Caritas; her sex is female; her native attribute is erotic allure, and the children she has produced issue from it; her manner of life is altruistic; her acquired attributes are the sister virtues, faith and hope, who are implicitly present, as well as her cultural refinement and education; her feelings are comprised by tender affection tinged with

Neuzeit, Symbolische Kommunikation und gesellschaftliche Wertesysteme 23 (Münster 2008) 9–31; and Spanily C., *Allegorie und Psychologie. Personifikationen auf der Bühne des Spätmittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit* (Münster: 2010).

56 An explicit theory of personification pertaining to the visual arts first appeared later in the sixteenth century in such publications as Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (Rome, Herdeiros de Giovanni Gigliotti: 1593); and Christoforo Giarda's *Bibliothecae Alexandrinae icones symbolicae* (Milan: Herdeiros Melchioris Malatestae: 1626). See Gombrich E.H., "Icones Symbolicae: The Visual Image in Neo-Platonic Thought", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 11 (1948) 163–192.

57 See Ueding G. (ed.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, vol. 6 (Tübingen: 2003), col. 811: Lemma "Personifikation".

58 Cicero Marcus Tullius, *De inventione*, trans. H.M. Hubbell (London: 1949) 71–72 (Cicero, Inv. 1.34–36).

59 Cf. Ueding, *Historisches Wörterbuch*, col. 806: Lemma: "Persona"; and Cicero, "De Inventione", 11.159–165".

melancholy; her manner of life is luxurious and elegant, and it is lived within an enclosed social space; her experiences are those of an affluent, soignée woman accustomed to luxury; her chief purpose is to bestow loving attention on her family.

The categories formulated by Cicero were well known. Erasmus dedicated a chapter to the description of persons in *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum*, his popular instructional text on richness of expression in Latin oratory and writing (first published in 1512).⁶⁰ Erasmus insists on the importance of vividness (*enargeia* or *evidentia*), which he closely associated with painting: 'We employ this [figure] whenever, for the sake of amplifying or decorating our passage, or giving pleasure to our readers, instead of setting out the subject in bare simplicity, we fill in the colours and set it up like a picture to be seen, so that we seem to have painted the scene rather than described it, and the reader seems to have beheld it.'⁶¹ In this context, Erasmus discusses different types of personification. First, he talks about the realistic representation of individuals, called dramatization (*prosopopoeia*). Second, he describes the delineation of abstract ideas, such as envy or sleep, as if they were persons (*prosopographia*). The personification of virtues is an instance of *prosopographia*.⁶² The goal for the orator is always to representation the embodied person as vividly and clearly as possible. Erasmus applies the term *prosopografia* to metaphors, similes, and parallels, thus indicating that the figure belongs more to the poetical genres.⁶³ Erasmus's definition licenses the application of the term *prosopographia* to painted personifications.

The task of portraying such personifications placed high demands on the painter's technical and intellectual skills. An abstract concept is bodied forth

60 Erasmus Desiderius, *Copia: Foundation of the abundant style. De duplici copia verborum ac rerum commentarii duo*, trans. – annot. Betty I. Knott., Collected Works of Erasmus 24 (Toronto etc.: 1978) 582–587. On the significance of this book, see the introductory notes to the quoted edition.

61 Erasmus, *Copia* 577: 'Ea utemur, quoties vel amplificandi, vel ornandi, vel delectandi gratia, rem non simpliciter exponemus, sed ceu coloribus expressam, in tabula spectadam proponemus, ut depixisse, non narrasse: lector spectasse, nō legisse videatur'. Erasmus Desiderius, *De duplici copia, verborum ac rerum* [...] (Cologne, Petrus Horst: 1562) 283.

62 Erasmus, *Copia* 582: 'His igitur est proxima personarum description, quam πρόσωποποιία appellant: tametsi nonnihil ab hac diſidet πρόσωγογραφία, non absurdē dixeris: proponitur enim ceu persona quedā. Cuiusmodi sunt & illa, virtutis ac voluptatis [...]'. Erasmus, *De duplici copia* 289.

63 Erasmus, *Copia* 587: 'Ateae quae propriē πρόσωγογραφία vacantur, metaphoris, similibus, & collationibus, fiunt illustriores. Cuius generis apud poētas magna uis est'. Erasmus, *De duplici copia* 295.

sensually in a meaningful, emotionally suggestive way. The fictitious entity is notably artificial and yet designed to have purchase on memories, thoughts and emotions associated with the marriage and the domestic sphere. The figure that results – Caritas – addresses the beholder tenderly, seductively, inviting him to reflect upon the nature of conjugal love and its charitable associations. Such a personification jointly function as an exemplum of wifely eros and its power of civilize.

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Zerner H., *Die Schule von Fontainebleau. Das graphische Werk* (Munich: 1969).

Maarten van Heemskerck's *Caritas*: Personifying Virtue, Animating Stone with Paint, Imaging the Image Debate

Arthur J. DiFuria

Portraying the noblest of Christian virtues as an antiquity on the verge of animation, Maarten van Heemskerck conceived *Caritas* for an audience eager to extol sacred art's centrality for worship [Fig. 18.1].¹ Van Heemskerck's choice to depict the embodiment of this particular virtue in this particular manner establishes the image debate, the status of good works, and the instructive capacity of art as the painting's discursive axes. Unlike contemporary images of *Caritas*, Van Heemskerck's painting broadcasts its transcendence of the materials of art, and thereby embodies and enlivens its ostensible subject, implicitly challenging the Reform notion of *sola fide* and the Reform contention that sacred art is only wood, paint, and stone that distracts from true spirituality. Drawing from his first-hand knowledge of a range of sculptural sources, Van Heemskerck used his skill at mimicking surface textures to portray *Caritas* as if hewn from marble, even as he left visible traces of paint and mobilized the personification and its allied figures, making them move in a lively manner. Portraying stone figures as if they were animated suggests art's most problematic aspect for Reformers: the idol worshipper's belief that the portrayed inhabits the object. But this same device highlights the painting's status as a manipulation of material that refers to its prototype. With *Caritas*, Van Heemskerck thus deployed the personification of this virtue to enact and confirm art's edifying capacity.

1 Grosshans R., *Maarten van Heemskerck. Die Gemälde* (Berlin: 1980) cat. no. 47a–c; and Harrison J., *The Paintings of Maarten van Heemskerck: A Catalogue Raisonné* (Ph.D. thesis, University of Virginia: 1987) cat. no. 63.



FIGURE 18.1 *Maarten van Heemskerck, Caritas (c. 1545). Oil on Panel, 715 × 365 mm. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemaeldegalerie, Vienna, Austria (Inv. No. GG2683).*
IMAGE © ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK.

Van Heemskerck and the Destruction of Art in the Age of Art

While no documentation exists confirming Van Heemskerck's views on the image debate, we should imagine him immersed in it.² Discourse on the destruction of the very kinds of objects he made for a living was ubiquitous and heated during his entire career. His continuous production of sacred art thus required his cultivation of a nuanced understanding of the iconoclast's motives.³ *Caritas's* status as an antiquarian painting of the 1540s may seem to distance it from concerns central to the image debate; to date, no sustained study has related northern European art *all'antica* to early Reform calls for the erasure or removal of sacred art.⁴ Most scholarship, moreover, focuses on the image debate's conspicuous nodes: its impassioned beginnings in the 1520s, its violent climax in the mid-1560s, and its denouement at the turn of the seventeenth century.⁵ However, neither *Caritas's* antique affect nor its timing should disqualify it from consideration within Reform contexts.

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- 2 On Van Heemskerck's prints and the image debate, see Freedberg D., "The Problem of Images in Northern Europe and its Repercussions in the Netherlands", in *Hafnia. Copenhagen Papers in the History of Art: Proceedings of the 7th International Colloquium in the History of Art* (Copenhagen: 1976) 35–37 and n. 98, who speculates that Van Heemskerck's prints portraying historical episodes of temple destruction—e.g., *Destruction of the Temple of Bel* and *Josiah Destroying the Temple of Ashtaroth and Chemosh*—reveal his sensitivity to the image debate, so much so that they were the source for Frans Hogenberg's famous print of the *beeldenstorm* of the 1560s, while offering no clear indication of his attitude towards the image debate. For Van Heemskerck's prints showing idol worship and temple destruction, see Veldman I.M., *The New Hollstein: Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts 1450–1700: Maarten van Heemskerck*, ed. G. Luijten, 2 vols. (Roosendaal – Amsterdam: 1993) I, nos. 65, 79, 90, 145–149, 231, 252, 254, 255, 258, 264, and 454.
 - 3 On Van Heemskerck's sacred commissions from the time of his return to Haarlem from Rome until his death, see Grosshans, *Gemälde* 50–60.
 - 4 Jonckheere K., "Images of Stone: The Physicality of Art and the Image Debates in the Sixteenth Century", *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 62 (2013) 117–143, addresses the Catholic response to iconoclasm and discusses St. Luke paintings by Van Heemskerck and Maarten De Vos.
 - 5 The bibliography on various aspects of the sixteenth century European image debate is vast. Overviews include Eire C., *War Against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge: 1989); and Arnade P., *Beggars, Iconoclasts, and Civic Patriots: the Political Culture of the Dutch Revolt* (Ithaca: 2008). On its early stages, see Belting H., *Likeness and Presence*, trans. E. Jephcott (Chicago: 1994) 459–470. On the *beeldenstorm* of 1566, see Freedberg D. *Iconoclasm and Painting in the Revolt of the Netherlands*, D.Phil. dissertation, Balliol College, Oxford University, 1973. Studies of the *beeldenstorm's* aftermath include Mochizuki M., *The Netherlandish Image After Iconoclasm, 1566–1672* (Burlington, VT: 2008);

David Freedberg's seminal approach to iconoclasm was to ask if there was 'any practical connection between [anti-image tracts] and the great iconoclastic outbursts of the sixteenth century'.⁶ With regard to *Caritas*, Freedberg's question might more fruitfully be inverted. Rather than tracing sacred art's destruction back to the image debate, we should situate its production in the historiographic moment after Hans Belting's groundbreaking identification of a transformation in sacred art's reception; by the first quarter of the sixteenth century, sacred imagery no longer functioned solely to facilitate worship, but also as the perceived product of artistry.⁷ Marcia Hall has used Belting's observation as a point of departure for considering the production of sacred art in Italy during the Cinquecento.⁸ She asks how artists working in the 'age of art' responded to the tension between the continuing demands for sacred imagery on the one hand and the modern demands placed on them, which fall under the rubric of art, on the other. In Hall's vision, Italian artists after the Reformation and before the Counter-Reformation attempted to master a multivalent sacred pictorial rhetoric. In addition to conveying sacred content, mid-century Italian paintings constituted responses to the developing discourse on the role of sacred imagery. *Caritas*'s context and content suggest that it functioned similarly for its northern audience: as a singularly rich response to the image debate that invited speculation on the status of sacred art and, collaterally, the status of good works in northern Europe at mid-century.

In the decades leading up to *Caritas*'s execution, events in the image debate and in Van Heemskerck's developing career doubtless fostered his awareness of sacred art's materiality and its role in promoting idol worship as crucial discursive concerns. Concurrent with the start of Van Heemskerck's career in the 1520s, Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt, Ludwig Hätzer, Ulrich Zwingli, Martin Luther, and Desiderius Erasmus among others began weaving a complex discourse questioning art's usefulness in worship.⁹ While their solutions

Vanhaelen A., *The Wake of Iconoclasm: Painting the Church in the Dutch Republic* (University Park, PA: 2012); and Jonckheere K., *Antwerp Art After Iconoclasm* (New Haven: 2013).

6 Freedberg D., "The Problem of Images" 26.

7 Belting H., *Likeness* 470–484.

8 Hall M., *The Sacred Image in the Age of Art* (New Haven: 2011). Other explorations of early modern sacred artistry in Belting's 'age of art' include Cole M. – Zorach R., "Introduction", in Cole – Zorach (eds.), *The Idol in the Age of Art: Objects, Devotions, and the Early Modern World* (Burlington, VT: 2009); and Nagel A., *The Controversy of Renaissance Art* (Chicago: 2011).

9 On Karlstadt, see Barge H., *Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: 1904). For Karlstadt's views on images, see Karlstadt A., *Von Abtuhung der Bylder*, in *Karlstadt, Emser, and Eck on Sacred Images, A Reformation Debate: Three Treatises in Translation*, trans. D. Bryan Mangrum – G. Scavizzi (Toronto: 2005) 21–44. On Karlstadt in the early image debate,

to the problem of sacred art differed, they all expressed related concerns about the sumptuousness, illusionism, and materiality of the visual arts; artists were seen masterfully to have manipulated art's materials to dazzle worshippers, convincing the more easily seduced of the image's living presence. Karlstadt, who provoked the breaking of images in Zurich in 1522, decried church art 'painted with satin and damask [...] adorned with gold crowns'. He went on to state that on occasion, even the artist could find himself compelled to 'bend double before [his images, having] forgotten that the images' eyes do not see'. Although Erasmus did not condone the destruction of church art, he also cited it as a potential temptation to idol worship, noting that the cult of relics has its 'legacy in paganism'. Opposing Karlstadt's iconoclasm, Martin Luther yet invoked sacred art's materiality, lamenting the vivid sight of its 'broken arms and legs', even as he proclaimed its power to steal the worshipper's heart and soul.¹⁰

As this discourse emerged, Van Heemskerck's own artistic development introduced him to the challenges the image debate posed to any northern European artist with antiquarian leanings; his early training climaxed when he assisted Jan van Scorel in his Haarlem workshop (1527–1530).¹¹ Scorel's time as keeper of Vatican antiquities under Adrian VI Boeyens (r. 1522–1523) occurred as the Vatican endured the first wave of anti-papist reform, which included critiques of indulgently sumptuous ecclesiastical art. The Dutch Pope's attitudes towards art exemplified the era's growing awareness of the distinction between the sacred and the artful.¹² Adrian never appears to have questioned the icon's

see Sider R., *Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt: The Development of his Thought* (Leiden: 1974) 166–171. On Hätzer, see Goeters J.F.G., *Ludwig Hätzer (ca. 1500 bis 1529). Spiritualist und Antitrinitarier* (Gütersloh: 1957). On the role of Zwingli and his circle in Zurich's iconoclasm, see Garside C., *Zwingli and the Arts* (Cambridge, MA: 1966); Gäbler U., *Huldrych Zwingli: His Life and Work* (Philadelphia, 1986) 72–78; and Potter G., *Zwingli* (Cambridge: 1976) 130–132. For Luther's view of iconoclasm during the early stages of the image debate, see Brecht M., *Martin Luther: Shaping and Defining the Reformation, 1521–1532* (Minneapolis: 1985) 28–33. For Erasmus's attitudes towards idolatry and iconoclasm, see Eire C., *War Against the Idols* 28–44.

10 All passages appear in Belting, *Likeness* 545–547.

11 On Van Heemskerck in Scorel's workshop, see Grosshans, *Gemälde* 29–32; Harrison, *Catalogue Raisonné* 11–30; and DiFuria A., *Heemskerck's Rome: Antiquity, Memory, and the Berlin Sketchbooks* (Ph.D. thesis, University of Delaware: 2008) 36–42.

12 Reiss S., "Adrian VI, Clement VII, and Art", in Gouwens K. – Reiss S.E. (eds.), *The Pontificate of Clement VII: History, Politics, Culture* (Burlington, VT: 2005) 346–347, contrasts Adrian's veneration of a miraculous medieval image of the Virgin, which children presented to him during his *possession*, with his famous disdain for antiquities and art after the antique.

role for worship. And despite his deserved reputation as a hater of antiquities, he maintained their status as historical artifacts worthy of preservation. Thus, as Scorel conveyed his Vatican experiences to Van Heemskerck in the workshop, discussions must have arisen regarding how best to conceive sacred works of art within the era's newly developing parameters.

Van Heemskerck left Scorel's workshop in 1530 to begin an extended *Wanderjahr* that culminated with his journey to Rome (1532–c. 1537). This phase of his career coincided with an early peak in the extremist calls for the destruction of sacred art: in addition to the iconoclasm in Zürich (1522), outbreaks occurred in Copenhagen (1530), Münster (1534), Geneva (1535), and Augsburg (1537).¹³ Recording the contents of Rome's most important collections of antiquities, Van Heemskerck's drawings indicate that he consorted with the city's most elite clerics and collectors.¹⁴ Therefore, news of such outbreaks undoubtedly reached him in Rome. And as we view his Roman drawings—mainly of the fragmentary remains of antiquity—we are impelled to imagine how the repeated task of drawing broken works of ancient art resonated with the effects of iconoclasm closer to home in northern Europe; this analogy must have added a millennial dimension to Van Heemskerck's understanding of art's instructive properties and the deleterious effects of art's loss on cultural and historical memory.

Whereas Van Heemskerck's drawings of Rome's architectural ruins have garnered much scholarly attention, his drawings of ancient sculpture and sculptural fragments, even though they are roughly equal in number, require to be studied more thoroughly.¹⁵ Van Heemskerck's exploration of sculptural antiquities—of pagan idols—provides a crucial, as yet untapped source for considering his attitude towards the image debate. Indeed, after the iconoclasm

13 On these early outbreaks, see Wandel L.P., *Voracious Idols and Violent Hands: Iconoclasm in Reformation Zurich, Strasbourg, and Basel* (Cambridge: 1994).

14 On Van Heemskerck's clerical milieu as evinced by his collection drawings, see DiFuria A., "Maerten van Heemskerck's Collection Imagery in the Netherlandish Pictorial Memory", *Intellectual History Review* 20,1 (2010) 32–38; and Christian K.W., "For the Delight of Friends, Citizens, and Strangers: Maarten van Heemskerck's Drawings of Antiquities Collections in Rome", in Bartsch T. – Seiler P. (eds.), *Rom Zeichnen: Maarten van Heemskerck, 1532–1536/37* (Berlin: 2012) 129–156.

15 The majority of Van Heemskerck's extant Roman drawings are preserved in Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, inv. nos. 79 D2 and 79 D2a. For facsimiles, see Hülsen C. – Egger H., *Die Römischen Skizzenbücher von Maerten van Heemskerck*, 2 vols. (Berlin: 1913/1916; facsimile ed., Soest: 1975). DiFuria, *Heemskerck's Rome* 1, n. 2 counts 78 drawings by or after Van Heemskerck portraying Roman topography and 77 sheets containing drawings of freestanding sculpture.



FIGURE 18.2 Philips Galle, after Maarten van Heemskerck, *Frontispiece, Clades Judææ Gentis* (1569). Engraving, 282 × 237 mm. Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin.
IMAGE © ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK.

of 1566, Van Heemskerck himself suggested as much. While he celebrated the Roman sojourn as the defining event of his career in two famous self-portraits, his second self-portrait also functioned as the frontispiece to the *Clades Judææ Gentis*, a series of prints exploring the divine causes of ruination and material destruction, as exemplified in selected Old Testament events [Fig. 18.2].¹⁶ Like its earlier painted counterpart, the frontispiece shows Van Heemskerck twice; his portrait bust appears on the socle of a fictive monument, while he also

16 On the relation of the *Clades* series' frontispiece to its imagery of ruins, see DiFuria A., "Self-Fashioning and Ruination in a Print Series by Maarten van Heemskerck", in Galassi M. – De Floriani A. (eds.), *Culture figurative a confronto tra Fiandre e Italia dal XV al XVII secolo, Atti del convegno internazionale Nord/Sud. Ricerche Fiamminghe al di qua delle Alpi. Prospettive di studio e indagini tecniche* (Padua: 2008) 117–125; and Groentjes M., "Clades Judææ Gentis: Patterns of Destruction", in Melion W.S. – Clifton J. – Weemans M. (eds.), *Imago Exegetica: Visual Images as Exegetical Instruments, 1400–1700*, *Intersections: Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture* 33 (Leiden – Boston: 2013) 519–521.

appears in the background, drawing the Eternal City's ruinous monuments, just as he did in the 1530s. Inscriptions on the socle and base combine to describe Van Heemskerck as 'an Apelles' of his age and equate the disastrous ruination he has portrayed with 'sins of the past [...] examples with the present [...] as well as [...] the future'.¹⁷ Thus, the frontispiece uses the pictorial and historical authority Van Heemskerck gained in Rome as a framing device for the edifying episodes that follow, which include incidents of idol worship, the destruction of idols, and the looting of temples.¹⁸

Van Heemskerck's choice to use his Roman experience of the 1530s as a rhetorical element in his pictorial response to the events of 1566 indicates that Rome's antiquities continued to impress him as instructive prompts for thinking about the intellectual, cultural, and spiritual value of art. A survey of his oeuvre reveals that during the mid to late 1540s, he began to develop his notion of antiquity's edifying potential into a sophisticated pictorial rhetoric for sacred art. Ruins began to occupy more space within his compositions and quotations of sculptural antiquities became even more conspicuous, more easily identified by his primary audience of *cognoscenti*. With its conspicuous conflation of antiquity and a sacred subject, *Caritas* stands as a crucial stage in this development, a painting that inevitably prompted viewers to consider art's role in the spiritual life.

Antiquity and Living Presence; Illusionism and Facture; the Rhetoric of Referentiality

In what follows, I locate *Caritas*'s appeal to a range of topics central to the image debate in the tension between form and content that the picture bodies forth. As a convincing painting of a sculptural antiquity, it constitutes a *paragone* emphasizing art's illusionistic (or deceitful) qualities. Its 'sculpted' figures, moreover, are conspicuously animate, prompting notions of idol worship.

17 The socle's inscription reads 'Martinus Heemskerck / Pictor, alter nostri / Sæculi Apelles, in: / ventionum Pater ad / vivium expressus (Maerten Heemskerck, painter, an Apelles of our age, father of (the following) inventions, expressed from life)'. The base's inscription reads 'DAMVS TIBI BENIGNE LECTOR, VNO LIBELLO TANQVAM IN / SPECVLO EXHIBITAS, MEMORABILIORES JVDÆÆ GENTIS CLADES, VT DELICTORVM SEMPER COMITES, ITA CVM PRÆSENTI, TVM POSTERÆ ÆTATI PRO EXEMPLIS FVTVRAS'. ('We deliver to you, the kindly reader, a little book displaying as in a mirror, the memorable disasters of the Jewish nation, so that the sins of the past count as examples with the present, as well as later ages, for the future'.) (Translation mine.)

18 DiFuria, "Self-Fashioning" 124–125.

Caritas's illusionism also vies with passages revealing its facture, ensuring the viewer's consciousness of its materiality. Finally, *Caritas*'s capacity to bring to mind a seemingly endless series of plausible sculptural, pictorial, and literary referents establishes a *de facto* tension between art's appeal to the intellect, which Reformers claimed distracted worshipers from spiritual matters, and its ultimately instructive capacity, reliant on its referential nature.

Aside from *Caritas*'s general similarities to other sixteenth-century pictures of the virtue, it has long been clear that no single source could have served as its model.¹⁹ In personifying Charity as a nurturing woman embracing a group of toddlers, Van Heemskerck has followed his predecessors and contemporaries on both sides of the Alps. Raphael, Lucas Cranach, Andrea del Sarto, and Frans Floris, for example, all show the virtue in this way.²⁰ In low relief on the fictive sculpture's base, Van Heemskerck included the pelican, the traditional symbol of Charity (and of Christ), which provides for its young by sacrificing its own blood.²¹ But these are the painting's only similarities with earlier and contemporary portrayals of Charity. None portrays her as a sculptural antiquity.²²

Before honing in on the minutiae of *Caritas*, it is worth noting that even the scale and configuration are allusive, suggesting a biblical passage that was then current in Christian polemics. *Caritas* was originally the central panel of a small triptych, flanked by smaller wings containing images of the virtues *Fides* and *Spes* (left and right, respectively).²³ The painting thus embodies St. Paul's seminal statement on charity in his first letter to the Corinthians: 'Now abideth faith, hope, and charity, but the *greatest* of these is charity.'²⁴ Taking their cue

19 Although Harrison, *Catalogue Raisonné* 582, does not explore *Caritas*'s possible sources in depth, he suggests Marcantonio Raimondi's prints of the *Seven Virtues in Niches* and Polidoro da Caravaggio's *sgraffito* decorations for the facades of Roman palazzi, now lost.

20 E.g., Raphael Sanzio, *Carità*, part of his *Theological Virtues*, 1507, oil on wood, 16 × 44 cm. Vatican, Pinacoteca, inv. no. 40331; Andrea del Sarto, *Carità*, 1518, oil on canvas, 185 × 137 cm. Paris, Louvre, inv. no. 712; Lucas Cranach the Younger, *Charity*, 1537–50, oil on beech, 56.3 × 36.2 cm. London, National Gallery, inv. no. NG2925; and Frans Floris, *Caritas*, c. 1560, oil on panel, 99 × 129 cm. Gdansk, Muzeum Narodowe.

21 Orgel S., "Gendering the Crown", in Grazia M. de – Quilligan M. – Stallybrass P. (eds.), *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture* (Cambridge: 1996) 133–136.

22 Lucas van Leyden, *Caritas*, 1530, engraving, 16.5 × 10.8 cm. Washington, D.C., National Gallery, inv. no. 1943.3.5645, shows *Caritas* in a manner suggesting his receipt of Michelangelan sculpture, but the print's quasi-domestic setting takes the figure out of the sculptural realm.

23 Grosshans, *Gemälde* 162; *Fides* and *Spes* were lost during World War II.

24 *Biblia Sacra*, 1 *Corinthians* 14:13: 'Nunc autem manent fides, spes, caritas, tria hæc: major autem horum est caritas'.

from Paul's words, papists claimed that a life of good works was the only true means to salvation. Vatican opponents cited charity's antitype, avarice, when decrying the transgressions that they thought had long signaled the need for reform.²⁵ Martin Luther, for example, opposed the papist advocacy of good works, championing instead a doctrine of *sola fide*—salvation through faith alone.²⁶ Viewers attuned to such matters would immediately recognize the allusion to Paul's words and, prompted by Charity's scale, would acknowledge her as the greatest of the three virtues portrayed.

It is also crucial to note the figural group's emphatic evocation of antique sculpture. Viewed alongside Van Heemskerck's corpus of Roman drawings, his post-Roman graphic and painted oeuvres reveal his remarkable capacity for synthesis, his absorption of antiquity's visual language for the invention of 'new antiquities'.²⁷ During the second half of the 1540s, no ancient sculpture was a more important source of invention for Van Heemskerck than the *Casa Sassi Apollo*, which he must have seen in Rome.²⁸ An engraving by Dirck Volkertszoon Coornhert, probably after a drawing by Van Heemskerck, likely documents Van Heemskerck's observation of the Apollo as the Sassi family displayed it in 1530s [Fig. 18.3].²⁹ Van Heemskerck's second *S. Luke Painting the Virgin* [Fig. 18.4], contemporaneous with *Caritas*, contains two references to the Apollo.³⁰ Van Heemskerck appropriated the background of the sculpture collection, where the Apollo sat, as it appears in the Coornhert engraving.

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- 25 See, for example, the popular acrostic traceable back to the Avignon papacy, 'Radix Omnium Malorum Avaritia (the root of all evil is avarice)', which appeared as a graffito in Rome and remained current in Reformation parlance. Also see Spitz L.W., *The Renaissance and Reformation Movements*, 2 vols. (St. Louis: 1980) II, 313; and Linder R.D., *The Reformation Era* (Westport, CT: 2010) 9.
 - 26 On the status of *sola fide* among reformers including Luther and Karlstadt, see Payton J., *Getting the Reformation Wrong* (Downers Grove, IL: 2010) 116–131. For Luther's thoughts on charitable works, see Brecht M., *Martin Luther: The Preservation of the Church, 1532–1546* (Minneapolis: 1999) 239–240, 258–259.
 - 27 On Van Heemskerck's Roman drawings as a source for his post-Roman inventions, see DiFuria, *Heemskerck's Rome* 100–120.
 - 28 For Van Heemskerck's study of other sculptures important for *Caritas*, see Hülsen – Egger, *Skizzenbucher* I, fols. 34r–v, 62v. On the Casa Sassi Apollo, see Barkan L., *Unearthing the Past: Archeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture* (New Haven: 1999) 173–189.
 - 29 For the drawing of the Casa Sassi collection signed 'M V Heemskerck', dated 1555, and thought to be a copy after a lost Van Heemskerck, see Hülsen – Egger, *Skizzenbucher* no. 2783. For the print, see Veldman, *New Hollstein: Maarten van Heemskerck* no. 586.
 - 30 Grosshans, *Gemälde* cat. no. 75; and Harrison, *Catalogue Raisonné* cat. no. 76.



FIGURE 18.3 *Dirck Volkertszoon Coornhert, after a drawing by Maarten van Heemskerck (?), Casa Sassi Cortile and Sculpture Collection (1553). Engraving, 375 × 298 mm. London, British Museum, 1928, 0313.176. COURTESY OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.*

But he also used the Apollo as the source for his Virgin Mary as she appears to St. Luke in the painting's foreground.³¹ We recognize the Apollo's echo in Mary's

31 On Van Heemskerck's increased usage in the late 1540s of conspicuous references to antiquities, see DiFuria A., "Remembering the Eternal in 1553: Maerten van Heemskerck's *Self Portrait Before the Colosseum*", *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 59 (2010) 93–95.



FIGURE 18.4 *Maarten van Heemskerck, St. Luke Painting the Virgin (c.1545). Oil on wood, 205.5 × 143.5 cm. Rennes, Musée des Beaux-Arts.*

IMAGE © ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK.

pose, clothing, and braided hair. *Caritas* is likewise indebted to the Sassi family's *Apollo*; Van Heemskerck has again maintained the antique source's braids, knotting a bun at the crown of her head. The *Apollo* and *Caritas* wear the same garment, gathered just below the breast by a knotted drawstring; *Apollo*'s and *Caritas*'s legs splay asymmetrically in a kind of seated *contraposto*. However,

while both the *St. Luke* and *Caritas* refer to the same antiquity as a prototype, they do so to different ends. The *St. Luke* is concerned with making; its depiction of St. Luke in the act of painting his vision of the Virgin before a collection argues for collecting – and the study of antiquity, facilitated by collecting – as a means to cultivating the sacred vision required if one is to paint icons.³² In contrast, *Caritas* implicates viewing; confronting its audience with antiquity's embodiment of the sacred constitutes a clear call to discuss the image debate's concerns with idol worship.

Appropriately, in the same pictorial moment that *Caritas* forces us to consider what the portrayal of a virtue based on antiquity might signify, it is no less assertive in its suggestion of living presence. Several details bring Van Heemskerck's figures virtually to life. A chaotic tangle of youthful exuberance, the seven children surrounding *Caritas* play in the unsettled manner of toddlers. The child on the virtue's lap at left tugs at her garment. At right, his counterpart tries to climb her stomach. As his head turns to face the viewer, the flesh of his shoulders and neck gather and bunch, indicating that he looks back reflexively; he has suddenly become aware that we view him.³³ At *Caritas*'s feet are three more children; one plays peek-a-boo with us from beneath her garment; another plays with the first's genitals; the third reclines, his right leg foreshortened and breaking the picture plane. *Caritas* herself also displays signs of animation: in a reflexive gesture, she uses both hands to shield the cavorting children from falling. Van Heemskerck also shows a lock of *Caritas*'s hair loosed from her bun, pointedly deviating from his antique source in the Sassi collection; this device, as if improvised, enlivens her and makes her appear less sculptural. The emphatically animate qualities shown by these apparently sculpted figures seem calculated to evoke or, better, provoke the anti-image view that impressionable worshippers must be protected from confusing image and prototype.

Van Heemskerck's depiction of *Caritas* as an animated sculpture heightens the figure's status as a potent, even confounding example of *prosopopoeia*. At the heart of its rhetoric is its broadcast of its own reach beyond simple personification. Via a conspicuous, multi-layered artifice, Van Heemskerck distinguishes *Caritas* from traditional sacred imagery; paint imitates stone crafted to imitate a figure, which in turn, embodies a concept. He has thus devised *Caritas* to puts its audience at three removes from the notion portrayed, making the

32 DiFuria, "Collection Imagery" 48.

33 For another example of this display of reflexivity in Van Heemskerck's oeuvre, see his *Adam and Eve*, c. 1550, oil on oak, Strasbourg, Musée des Beaux Arts, inv. no. 1747 A. Also see Grosshans, *Gemälde* cat. no. 71; and Harrison, *Catalogue Raisonné* cat. no. 75.

act of viewing a *de facto* interrogation of sacred imagery's status. Thus, within the context of the image debate, *Caritas* problematizes the relation between sacred art's form, function, and content. Viewers can only have access to the idea portrayed before them through an understanding of the very notion of artifice's role in conveying it to them.

Confirming *Caritas*'s emphatic artifice is the indebtedness of many of its lifelike details to other works of art. Van Heemskerck synthesized motifs and devices in works by Michelangelo, Raphael, and others. At any point during his pre-Roman phase, Van Heemskerck could have studied the Christ in Michelangelo's *Bruges Madonna*, with whom some of *Caritas*'s children share a profound precariousness [Fig. 18.5].³⁴ Michelangelo sculpted this Christ to gaze downward towards his right foot while attempting to step off his mother's lap. But his right foot rests only partially on her garment, not on a solid foundation. Thus, as with toddlers, unpracticed at reconciling their bodies with gravity and the spaces they negotiate, Michelangelo's Bruges Christ appears on the verge of slipping out of his mother's grasp. Viewers could see this detail as a foreshadowing of Christ's eventual tragic fate, or a reminder of his status in the eyes of Christians as the redeemer of a fallen humanity. Similarly, *Caritas*'s seven children, many of whom are close to falling, could remind viewers of the famous passage from Proverbs, 'a just man shall fall seven times and shall rise again: but the wicked shall fall down into evil'.³⁵

In Rome, we know that the exhaustive study Van Heemskerck undertook led him to the Sistine Chapel and the Villa Farnesina.³⁶ Motifs in both locations later became important for *Caritas*. Michelangelo's *grisaille* atlantes appear to have provided Van Heemskerck with inspiration for the painting's children, especially the raised arms of the one who lifts the virtue's garment. Van Heemskerck's reference to these extravagant exempla by Michelangelo is provocative given the reformers' charges that the Vatican, by channeling into art and architecture the money paid for indulgences, rendered hollow its theological advocacy of good works.

34 On the Bruges Madonna, in the Low Countries by 1506, and its impact on Netherlandish art, see Ewing D., "The Influence of Michelangelo's Bruges Madonna", *Revue belge d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'art* 47 (1978) 77–105.

35 See *Liber Proverbiorum*, "Caput xxiv", v. 16, in *Biblia Sacra: vulgatae editionis Sixti v et Clementis VII Pont. Max.* (Paris: 1861) fol. 755v: 'Septies enim cadet Justus et resurgit: impii autem corruent in malum'.

36 For Van Heemskerck's prints of Michelangelo's *ignudi*, see Veldman, *New Hollstein: Maarten van Heemskerck* nos. 553–572. Van Heemskerck's study of the frescoes in the Villa Farnesina is evident in *ibid.* no. 72, and Hülsen – Egger, *Skizzenbucher* fol. 35r.



FIGURE 18.5 *Michelangelo Buonarroti, Bruges Madonna (1501–1504). Marble, 200 cm. Church of Our Lady, Bruges.*

IMAGE © ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK.

Another pointed allusion to a Roman work involves the child behind Caritas's left shoulder, in shadow. He appears to be running in full stride, striking a pose uncannily close to Raphael's Galatea in the Villa Farnesina, right down to the extended index finger of the right hand [Fig. 18.6]. Van Heemskerck's quotation of Galatea's pose is no mere formal borrowing. The name 'Galatea' not only



FIGURE 18.6 *Raphael Sanzio, Galatea (1512). Fresco, 295 × 225 cm. Villa Farnesina, Rome.*
IMAGE © ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK.

belongs to the nereid that Raphael painted, but is also the name of Pygmalion's legendary statue that came miraculously to life. Such a reference underscores *Caritas's* status as a statue *and* a living presence, as well as calling attention to the painter's engagement with the notion of the 'living image' within the contemporary image debate.

Although we have no documentation of a visit by Van Heemskerck to Florence, *Caritas* also appropriates motifs of lively children from a series of sculptural and pictorial compositions to be seen there.³⁷ The painting's contorted children are akin to the profound restlessness of the Christ child in Michelangelo's *Medici Madonna*. The sculpture was in San Lorenzo's unfinished New Sacristy during the early 1530s, when Van Heemskerck was in Italy.³⁸ The New Sacristy could have also provided Van Heemskerck with inspiration for the child who clings to Caritas's left thigh. His reclining, twisted frontal pose suggests a combination of Michelangelo's sculptures of Dusk and Day. Michelangelo's pupil, Jacopo Sansovino, sculpted a similarly twisting child in his *Caritas*, a motif that Andrea del Sarto also utilized in the Chiostro dello Scalzo [Fig. 18.7].³⁹ Both *Caritas* and a later print after Van Heemskerck's design, *The Reward of Labor and Diligence*, indicate his study of the Sansovino, the Del Sarto, or both [Fig. 18.8].⁴⁰ All four images share the motif of the child who peers out from under the virtue's garment. Van Heemskerck's later print is especially clear in its indebtedness to Sansovino and/or Del Sarto; as in the earlier Florentine compositions, the child hides behind the virtue rather than in front of her. For erudite viewers, the child's play with Charity's robe may evoke a series of associations that put a fine point on the status of the virtue in Christian polemics; ancient proverbs link charity and its absence with the nearness of one's garment to one's own flesh. Erasmus cites 'We all of us wish better to ourselves than to others' ('Omnes sibi melius esse malunt quam alteri'), which he likens to the ancient proverb 'The tunic is nearer than the skin' ('Tunica proprior pallio est'), and the more current saying, 'Charity begins at home'.⁴¹ The rich referentiality in these motifs argues for art's instructiveness.

Van Heemskerck's manipulation of paint reinforces these referential prompts by highlighting the painting's materiality and demonstrating its participation in a multivalent *paragone*. Close viewing of the small panel reveals a

37 Rosier B., "The Victories of Charles v: A Series of Prints by Maarten van Heemskerck, 1555–56", *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 20,1 (1990–1991) 36, puts forward the suggestion that Van Heemskerck looked at art in Florence, Michelangelo's New Sacristy, San Lorenzo, in particular.

38 On the completion of the New Sacristy in stages, see Wallace W.E., *Michelangelo at San Lorenzo: The Genius as Entrepreneur* (Cambridge: 1994).

39 On the frescoes in the Chiostro dello Scalzo, see Hirdt W., *Barfuss zum lieben Gott: der Freskenzyklus Andrea del Sartos im Florentiner Chiostro dello Scalzo* (Tübingen: 2006).

40 Veldman, *New Hollstein: Maarten van Heemskerck* no. 506.

41 Erasmus D., *Collected Works of Erasmus: Adages Ili to Iviio*, trans. R.A.B. Mynors (Toronto: 1982) 309–310.



FIGURE 18.7 *Andrea del Sarto, Carità (c. 1510). Grisaille fresco. Florence, Chiostro dello Scalzo.*
IMAGE © AUTHOR.

multifaceted facture that imitates marble and flesh; painterly passages broadcast its definitive status as a painting.⁴² From a regular viewing distance, careful

⁴² Van Heemskerck's contemporaneous *Ecce Homo Altarpiece*, 1544, oil on wood, 162 × 89 cm (central panel), 171 × 52 cm (wings), Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, M.Ob.595, bears a similar technical affect. For a sustained scientific analysis of Van Heemskerck's



FIGURE 18.8 *Philips Galle, after a drawing by Maarten van Heemskerck, The Reward of Labor and Diligence (1572). Engraving, 21 × 25 cm. London, British Museum, 1875, 0710.442. COURTESY OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.*

choices of color and lighting combine to persuade us of the painting's successful mimesis of the smooth, reflective texture and the warm off-white tone of the polished Carrara marble of so many sculptures Van Heemskerck observed in Rome. *Caritas* thus invites comparison with the *grisaille* figures in earlier Netherlandish altarpieces. Consider the prototypical example of painted *grisaille* in the famous panel by one of the paragons of northern realism: Sts John the Baptist and John the Evangelist from the Van Eyck brothers' *Ghent Altarpiece* [Fig. 18.9]. The Van Eycks crafted their *grisaille* saints to resemble their polyptych's fleshly figures. Although the saints stand on sculptural bases and are painted in a gray, stone-like pigment, their presentation amidst paintings of Gabriel, the Virgin, and donors implies that they share the same ontological status; whether the drapery is the red of the donors, the off-white of angel and Virgin, or the saints' gray, it folds and responds to gravity in the same

painting technique during the 1540s, as evinced by the *Ecce Homo Altarpiece*, see Woollett A.T. – Szafran Y. – Phenix A., *Drama and Devotion: Heemskerck's Ecce Homo Altarpiece from Warsaw* (Los Angeles: 2012) 29–81.



FIGURE 18.9 *Jan and Hubert van Eyck, Polyptych with the Adoration of the Lamb (completed 1432). Overall view of the closed workday panels. Oil on wood, 350 × 223 cm. Cathedral of St. Bavo, Ghent.*

IMAGE © ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK.

manner. The Van Eycks further obscured the distinction between figure and sculpture by framing donors and saints with the same niches and tracery. But *Caritas's* mimesis is richer by comparison. The Van Eycks' *grisaille* figures do

not so much suggest the careful study of sculpture, as adduce their pictorial mastery of sculptural effects. Van Heemskerck, on the other hand, has combined his Netherlandish knack for manipulating paint with *Caritas's* carefully observed fidelity to sculpture to invoke pagan antiquity's physical presence.

However, with other technical details, Van Heemskerck challenges the painting's illusionism, compelling us further to consider how it operates as a *paragone*. *Caritas's* facture is apparent, opposing its own convincing mimesis of marble. Highlights that expertly mimic the reflective surfaces of polished marble yet resolve insistently into paint. This is particularly true in the highlights of *Caritas's* braids, her drapery, and the pelican's wings. Especially poetic are the painterly passages on the tips of *Caritas's* fingers, a clear suggestion of fingernails, which imply that she is not made of marble, but flesh. The painting achieves its convincing imitation of marble via – and perhaps even despite – painterly passages that broadcast its definitive status as a painting.

Underscoring the painting's mimesis is Van Heemskerck's masterful blurring of the distinction between viewing space and pictorial space. From the fictive concave niche that houses the sculpture to the seated toddler's foreshortened leg, he has composed the figure group not just in relation to the frame, but also in relation to the picture plane. Completing this *tour de force* illusion of three-dimensionality, the toddler at right who is about to fall off of *Caritas's* lap transgresses the painting's fictive red frame, the tip of his toe poking against the painting's actual wooden one. By their conspicuous nature, such overt spatial devices at once invite us to see how the sculpture's physical presence is a function of the illusionistic devices that present it. In fact, such details announcing Van Heemskerck's technical and conceptual mastery were common throughout his work. The quintessential example must be his use of an illusionistic *cartellino* in the famous *Self-Portrait Before the Colosseum*. In that example, the *cartellino* appears as if pinned to a fictive painting showing Van Heemskerck drawing the Colosseum, which sits behind a larger, foregrounded image of an older Van Heemskerck occupying the painting's left half. Expressing the passage of time via spatiality, this device affirms Van Heemskerck's continued mastery of the antique past and displays his *ingegno*. But it also attests his mastery of his medium. Thus, it proclaims art's materiality as a viewing concern. Likewise, *Caritas's* conspicuous challenges to frame and picture plane, in the context of the painting's complex *paragone*, confirm that Van Heemskerck deliberately highlighted the picture's materiality, both in conception and execution.

The painting's unfolding pictorial and material illusions and realities are closely associated with the face of the child who lifts *Caritas's* robe. He appears to wear a theatrical mask, yet another allusion to the thematic of

concealment. A plausible interpretation of this device comes from Alciato's *Emblematum liber*.⁴³ The text for emblem number 189 gives access to the poetics associated with the theatrical mask [Fig. 18.10]. The text accompanying the image of a fox holding an actor's mask describes the mask in ways analogous to Van Heemskerck's *Caritas*: 'skillfully finished, so elegantly made that the only thing wanting was breathing'. 'In all other ways', the text states, 'it seemed alive'. However, the emblem's title proclaims, 'Mind, not outward form, prevails' ('*Mentem non formam plus pollere*').⁴⁴ Thus, the mask invites viewers to think about images, rather than allowing them to be seduced by masterful imitations of things portrayed after life; if a virtuosic mimesis is all we see, then we have not seen past the mask, past the material, which is, after all, a performed illusion. The concepts that drive sacred art's making, the thoughtful viewing it prompts, not its form alone, are what give it value. This is how *Caritas*'s referentiality embodies—personifies—the instructive nature of art and antiquities. Accordingly, it is precisely the kind of 'smart' religious painting that would have appealed to the Christian humanists in Van Heemskerck's antiquarian circle.

Conclusion: Situating *Caritas*

In its ability to spark a full, elaborated viewing response, *Caritas* is like the virtue it embodies; it continues to give. The picture is a *tour de force*: combining mastery of antiquity and of painting, *Caritas* is so accomplished that it trumps the material nature of the painter's medium. Moreover, it taps a rich vein in the polemics of the image debate. Given the staple criticism that art was 'mere wood and stone', Van Heemskerck's material *paragone* is pointed indeed. The painting's form and content embody the contentious overlap between the sacred and the artful in Belting's notion of an age of art, but assumes the burden of the icon in its maximized tension between regimes of living presence and art. It is likely that these features were not lost on viewers attuned to the

43 Alciato Andrea, *Emblematum liber* (Augsburg, Heinrich Steyner: 1534).

44 Ibid. fol. C5r: 'Ingressa vulpes in Choragi pergulam, / Fabre expositum invenit humanum caput. / Sic eleganter fabricatum, ut spiritus / Solum deesset, cæteris viveret, / Id illa cum sumpsisset in manus ait, / Hoc quale caput est, sed cerebrum non habet' ('A fox entered a theatrical store-room, found an actor's mask, finely polished and so elegantly made that the only thing wanting was the spirit. In all other ways, it seemed alive. Taking it in hand, the fox addressed it: this is what a head is, but it does not have a brain'). Translation mine.



FIGURE 18.10 *Andrea Alciato, "Emblem 189: Mentem, non formam, plus pollere". In Emblematum liber (Augsburg, Heinrich Steyner: 1534) fol. C5r. IMAGE © UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW LIBRARY, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS.*

terms of the mid-sixteenth-century image debate, concerned as they were with idol worship, the Vatican's preoccupation with antiquities, the status of art in places of Christian worship, and sacred art's validity in the emerging discourses of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. A close reading of the painting suggests its abundant prompts, the *ingegno* in Van Heemskerck's *conchetto*: by its virtue as a discursive prompt, the painting is inevitably instructive in sacred matters. Even features that might ostensibly provoke an anti-image view serve the picture's overarching agenda of embodying art's instructive capacity. Thus *Caritas's* referential nature facilitates its edifying reception.

What remains is to place the painting. If the complex referential weave we describe above was the point for Van Heemskerck and his audience, for whom did this personification of the virtue of Charity actually resonate? How could *Caritas's* tensions best play out *in situ*? Privately scaled, devoid of devotional content, it is unlikely that *Caritas* ever occupied a church setting.⁴⁵ Rather, it is plausible that Van Heemskerck conceived *Caritas* for a collection, *Wunderkammer*, or *studiolo* with a humanist audience in mind. The Rennes *St. Luke* clarifies the importance of such a setting for the contemplation of the sacred. Jefferson Harrison has already speculated that the painting belonged to someone in the humanist engraver Dirck Volkertszoon Coornhert's circle.⁴⁶ Given Van Heemskerck's collaboration with Coornhert, and Coornhert's advocacy for open, tolerant discourse on spiritual matters, *Caritas* would seem an appropriate image for a viewer such as he. However, Coornhert did not articulate his doctrine of tolerance until much later.

Caritas's myriad affirmations of art's instructive capacities and its appeal to a viewing consciousness concerned with the status of good works suggest a more specifically papist audience. This notion finds support in the painting's provenance. One finds the painting first listed in an inventory of 1613 from the house of Croÿ, the noted family of nobles and clerics who, over the course of the sixteenth century, demonstrated steadfast allegiance to the Vatican.⁴⁷ Thus, *Caritas's* likeliest patron is Charles de Croÿ, Bishop of Tournai (b. 1506–d. 64, r. 1524–64).⁴⁸ A painting of the virtue of Charity could have had specific resonance for Charles at the time Van Heemskerck painted it. In his youth, Charles

45 Harrison, *Catalogue Raisonné* 584.

46 Ibid., 585.

47 For the painting's provenance, see <http://bilddatenbank.khm.at/viewArtefact?id=902>. On the House of Croÿ, see Martin G., *Histoire et généalogie de la maison de Croÿ* (La Ricamarie: 1980).

48 Bietenholz P.G. – Deutscher T.B. (eds.), *Contemporaries of Erasmus: A Biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation*, 3 vols. (Toronto: 1985) 1, 364–365.

studied under Jacobus Latomus (b. c. 1475–d. 1544) at the University of Leuven. Opposed to the Reformation and infamous as a master inquisitor, Latomus and Martin Luther engaged in a published dispute regarding several theological tenets.⁴⁹ Among them was the question of whether or not the Christian could achieve salvation through good works, as Latomus held, or through faith alone, as Luther contended. In the mid-1540s, when Van Heemskerck painted *Caritas*, Latomus had just died. Moreover, this was when his pupil, Charles, was in the process of building a chateau in Moorsel, a village strategically located between Tournai, Antwerp, Brussels, and Ghent.⁵⁰ In such a setting, a venue of quietude conducive to sharpening the mind and cultivating memory and knowledge, the bishop could return to *Caritas* repeatedly. In addition to recalling his former teacher Latomus, who had argued for the spiritual importance of good works, he could bring to mind the Eternal City, allowing its antiquities to prompt thoughts on the devastating losses incurred by the destruction of art.

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49 Luther M., “Answer to Latomus”, in Atkinson J. (ed.), *Luther: Early Theological Works* (London: 1962) 332–333, 357. On this dispute, see Vinken L., “Jacobus Latomus en Maarten Luther”, in Eijl E. van (ed.), *Facultas S. Theologiae Lovaniensis 1432–1797, bijdragen tot haar geschiedenis* (Leuven: 1977) 299–311.

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Abraham Bloemaert and Caritas: A Lesson in Perception

Caroline O. Fowler

The great Utrecht draftsman Abraham Bloemaert (1566–1651) designed a printed drawing book dedicated to the study of the human face and figure, a work which his son Frederik engraved and published as the *Artis Apellae liber* (1650–1656) following his father's death in 1651.¹ The drawing book contains a series of *exempla* by a master artist for beginning draftsmen to copy in order to study the outline and the modeling of the human body.² The book begins with sensory body parts (eyes, ears, noses, mouths) and progresses from limbs (arms and legs) to faces and nudes. The drawing book also presents a series of chiaroscuro prints that utilize tone to heighten the viewer's attention to the creation of form through variations of light and shade. The inclusion of chiaroscuro prints expands the book's pedagogic program, demonstrating the necessary interrelationship in draftsmanship between line (as seen in the line engravings) and light and shade (as embodied in the chiaroscuro prints).

The importance of chiaroscuro for the pedagogy of drawing is exemplified by the material medium of the *Artis Apellae liber*'s title page [Fig. 19.1], a chiaroscuro woodblock print that represents a young draftsman at work in the artist's studio. In this title page, a young man with stylus and sketchbook in hand gazes up at a plaster cast of a reclining nude figure, while he sits surrounded by plaster casts of faces, limbs, and torsos.³ The draftsman Abraham and engraver

1 On the print history of the *Artis Apellae liber*, see Bolten J., *Method and Practice: Dutch and Flemish drawing books, 1600–1750* (Landau: 1985) 66–67; Leijzapf I., *Het Tekenboek 'Artis Apellae liber' van Abraham and Frederik Bloemaert* (Leiden: 1972) 8–28; and Roethlisberger M., *Abraham Bloemaert and his Sons: Paintings and Prints* (Doornspijk: 1993) 389–417.

2 Bolten argues that the *Artis Apellae liber* belongs to a 'master model' of the printed drawing book; see Bolten, *Method and Practice* 66–67.

3 For the history of the chiaroscuro woodcut, see Bialler N., *Chiaroscuro Woodcuts: Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617) and his Time* (Amsterdam – Ghent: 1992); Ackley C., review of *Chiaroscuro Woodcuts: Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617) and his Time*, in *Print Quarterly* 1.12 (1995) 80–83; Kemmer C., *Von Cranach bis Baselitz – Meisterwerke des Clairobscur-Holzschnitts*, exh. cat., Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, Braunschweig (Braunschweig: 2003); Strauss W.L., *Chiaroscuro: The Clair-Obscur Woodcuts by the German and Netherlandish Masters of the*



FIGURE 19.1 Frederick Bloemaert after Abraham Bloemaert, "A Young Draftsman". *Artis Apellae liber* (1650–1656), plate 1. Engraving and woodcut, 30.5 × 22.3 cm. London, The British Museum of Art, Collection of Prints and Drawings.

IMAGE © THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

xv1th and xv11th Centuries (Greenwich: 1973); Rosand D. – Muraro M., *Titian and the Venetian Woodcut* (Washington: 1976); Lehmann-Haupt L., *An Introduction to the Woodcut of the Seventeenth Century* (New York: 1977); and Thiel P.J.J. van, "Houtsneden van Werner van den Valckert en Mozes van Uytenbroeck: De Hollandse houtsneede in het eerste kwart van de zeventiende eeuw", *Oud Holland* 92,1 (1978) 7–42.

Frederik employ *chiaroscuro*—a relief-like medium formed through gradations of light and shade—to imagine the threshold space of the studio. In the title page, the young draftsman copies after sculptural casts. From the inner pages of the drawing book, the student will imitate the engraved studies of both two-dimensional and three-dimensional forms reduced to two-dimensions. The engraver Frederik uses the qualities of *chiaroscuro*—evocation of form through light and shade—to evoke the study of three-dimensional forms in the studio. The printed drawing book itself may be seen as a ‘studio-in-a-book’. Abraham and Frederik Bloemaert suggest through the medium of *chiaroscuro* for the title page the progression from copying two-dimensional forms in printed drawing books such as the *Artis Apellae liber* to the study of three-dimensional bodies in the studio. In its paper sculptural form, the *chiaroscuro* print embodies the movement from the two-dimensional page to three-dimensional bodies.

The inclusion of *chiaroscuro* prints within the *Artis Apellae liber* aligns with a tradition of drawing pedagogy, in which artists copied these woodblock prints to meditate upon the subtleties of modeling and to become practised in the realization of three-dimensional effects.⁴ *Chiaroscuro*—from the words *chiaro* for light and *scuro* for darkness—analyzes form through the distribution and movement of lights and shadows on surfaces. Contemporary texts on artistic practice in the Low Countries show that looking at objects and bodies in terms of light and shadow guided drawing pedagogy. In his chapter on ‘draftsmanship’ (*teyckenkonst*), the theorist and painter Karel van Mander (1548–1606) emphasizes the importance of copying *chiaroscuro* prints from an early stage. As opposed to the linear outlines of black-and-white engraving, *chiaroscuro* captures variations of tonal values, teaching students to see in light and shadow. According to Van Mander, Parmigianino (1503–1540) was a master of this technique, whose ‘prints with ground tints and effective highlights have opened the eyes of many a mind’.⁵ Van Mander further stresses the importance of *chiaroscuro* in the biography of Bartholomeus Spranger (1546–1611), where he relates how Spranger learned to draw from the *chiaroscuro* prints of Frans Floris (1517–1570) and Parmigianino.⁶ Van Mander recommends that students

4 In his *Light der teken en schilderkonst* (Amsterdam, Crispijn van de Passe: 1643), Bloemaert’s Utrecht contemporary Crispijn van de Passe the Younger (1594–1670) also includes woodcuts of figures in prayer.

5 Mander K. van, *Den Grondt der edel vry schilder-konst*, ed. H. Miedema, 2 vols. (Utrecht: 1973) vol. II, 12.

6 Mander Karel van, “Het leven van Bartholomeus Sprangher”, in idem, *Het Schilder-Boeck* (Haarlem, Paschier van Wesbusch: 1604), fol. 269r. For the translation, see Mander K. van,

draw in charcoal or chalk on blue paper at an early stage of training, as a way of grounding their practice in the consideration of light and shadow.

The Bloemaerts used chiaroscuro to introduce their printed drawings and included six other chiaroscuro prints in the *Artis Apellae liber*, including: *A Saint in Prayer*, *Mother and Child*, *Variations on the Three Graces*, *Holy Family*, an *Angel Smiting the People* and the particular focus of this chapter, *Caritas* [Fig. 19.2]. While these subjects do not cohere into a logically consistent 'set', the material properties of light take on metaphysical dimensions in a subset of the chiaroscuro woodcuts, as will be seen. The Bloemaerts take advantage of the three-dimensional effect produced by the chiaroscuro's tonal gradations, to investigate the medium's representative potential for the portrayal of abstract concepts, which, as the Caritas figure makes evident, are relevant to the practice of draftsmanship and its pedagogy. In turn, the color and tone of the chiaroscuros stand out against the preponderance of black-and-white line engravings. In this way, the chiaroscuros draw attention to themselves as worthy of particular consideration by the 'reader' of the printed drawing manual. The personified representation of Caritas embodies a tradition traceable to the writings of Augustine, for whom Caritas is the chain that binds man to God. As he writes, Caritas is 'that movement of the soul toward delight in God and in one's neighbor that originates in God himself'.⁷ Caritas is the 'love of one's neighbor' (*amor proximi*) as a means to realize 'love of God' (*amor Dei*). In the seventeenth century, Caritas came to play an important role in pedagogy as artists, theologians and philosophers sought to articulate educational programs that would not only teach skills or knowledge but also serve as templates for the utilization of these skills and knowledge in society.

While these questions of the association between the love of one's neighbor and God might seem irrelevant to a printed drawing book, the *Artis Apellae liber* engages with contemporaneous theological and political questions through its inclusion of Caritas and the particularity of her personification.⁸

The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, ed. H. Miedema, 6 vols. (Doornspijk: 1994) v, 334.

7 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. D.W. Robertson, Jr. (New York: 1958) 111.10.16: 'Caritatem voco motum animi ad freundum Deo propter ipsum, et se atque proximo propter deum'.

8 Paxson J.J., *The Poetics of Personification*, Literature, Culture, Theory 6 (Cambridge: 1994) 1. As Paxson points out, there has been little discrimination in art history between allegory and personification, while discerning between the two has been crucial in literary theory. In this chapter, I hope to point towards one of the ways in which understanding personification as separate from allegory is a step towards defining the specific role of personification in art history.



FIGURE 19.2 *Frederick Bloemaert after Abraham Bloemaert, "Caritas". Artis Apellae liber (1650–1656), plate 40. Engraving and woodcut, 19 × 15.2 cm. London, The British Museum, Collection of Prints and Drawings.*

IMAGE © THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

The Bloemaerts's presentation of the virtue of Caritas stands out for its apparently discordant elements. The idea of Caritas embodies the harmonic relationship realized in society when man binds himself to God, a harmony often realized in personifications of Caritas where a woman (personifying Caritas) suckles an infant at her breast, while protectively nurturing the children around her. In contrast, the Bloemaerts's personification of Caritas does not feed the child cradled in her arm. Instead the child, its eyes downcast, turns towards the viewer in an expression of discontent. The other children neither

play among themselves nor harmoniously revel in their mother's company, but instead hide from the viewer and seek shelter under *Caristas*' clothing. The Bloemaerts's odd presentation of Caritas resonates with what might justly be called a crisis of charity in the seventeenth-century Low Countries.⁹ In the wake of the religious wars, iconoclasm and the Reformation, the role of Caritas and neighborliness in communities was a crucial topic of discussion among artists, writers, and theologians. Moreover, the presence of Caritas in the printed drawing book suggests that draftsmanship itself, construed as the study of faces, character, and passions, offers a means to meditate upon the interrelationship between 'love of those near' (*amor proximi*) and 'love of God' (*amor Dei*).

The Drawing Lessons

The first lesson of the *Artis Apellae liber* emerges as a fragmented landscape of eyes, mouths, noses, and profiles [Fig. 19.3]. Five rounded pupils encased in lids, lashes, and brows arc across the bottom of the page. In contrast to the varied directionality of these pupils, a profile cuts down the center of the lesson. In this statuesque face, the socket remains empty, a grotesque image of blinding seen in the excess of faceless eyes. Lips part to suggest the upward motion of a saint's ecstasy. A rounded cheek and mouth intimate a child's face. An unruly moustache rhymes with a lock of hair brushing against an ear. Cut out from their faces and placed into a visual clamor of juxtapositions, these faceless eyes, ears, noses, and mouths allude to infinite variations of histories and narratives, saints and cherubs, lapidary fragments and modern persons. As the introductory engraving to the printed drawing book, this lesson situates draftsmanship within a tradition of copying body parts, a workshop pedagogy for apprentices, by means of which they learned the rudiments of *teyckenconst*.¹⁰

9 For a critical overview of the important relationship between charity and seventeenth-century artistic production in the Low Countries, see Muller S.D. '*Charitas*' and '*Naastenliefde*' in the Seventeenth Century: Pictures of Charity and the Poor for Dutch Charitable Institutions (Berkeley: 1982).

10 This workshop tradition developed in the medium of print with artists such as Odoardo Fialetti (1573–1638) and Luca Ciamberlano (1599–1641), who made printed drawing books composed of bodily fragments, instantiating the practice with copying sensory organs. This Italian tradition of printed drawing books travelled North through the printing houses of Europe. The Bloemaerts could have seen numerous variations of drawing book that would have inspired the *Artis Apellae liber*. Examples include *The Diagraphia* (1616), printed in Amsterdam by Jan Janssonius, or Claes Jan Visscher's republications of

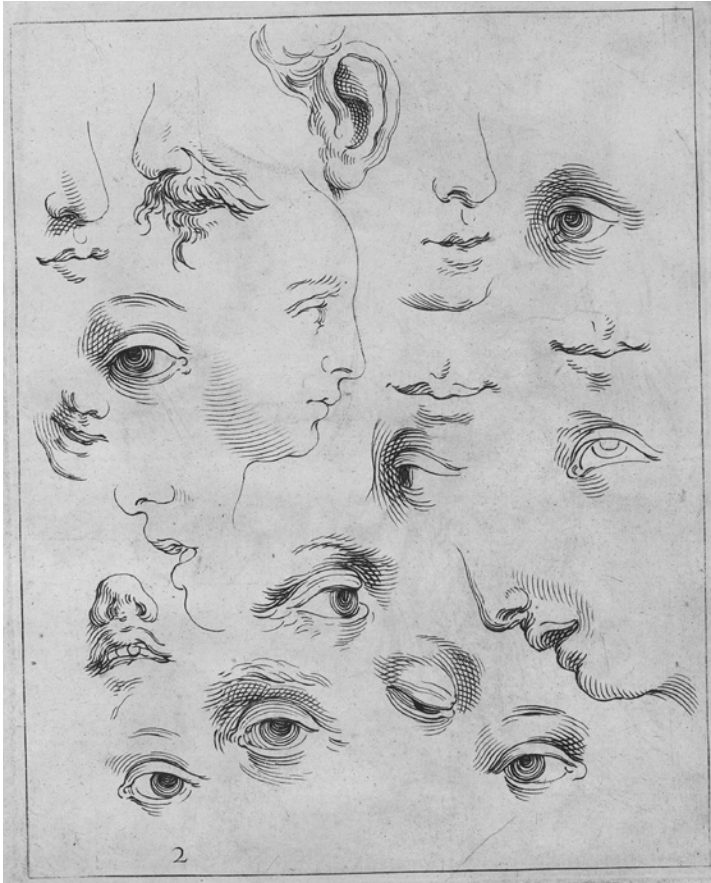


FIGURE 19.3 Frederick Bloemaert after Abraham Bloemaert, "Lesson 2". *Artis Apellae liber* (1650–1656), plate 2. Engraving, 19 × 14.8 cm.

London, The British Museum, Collection of Prints and Drawings.

IMAGE © THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

In the following lessons, these parts come together to form faces, eyes, mouths, and noses set into the fuller context of interconnecting cheeks, chins, and foreheads. Facial fragments that evoke partial sensations are united into studies of persons and passions. With four heads in lesson 25 [Fig. 19.4], Bloemaert contrasts two profiles: one of an Apollonian youth with soft curling locks and parted lips, and another of an old man with a full beard, furrowed brow, and

Ciamberlano's work: *Fundamentales regulae artis pictoriae et sculpt* (1640); *Fondamenten der teyckenkonst* (1651); and *Lucidissimum speculum* (n.d.).

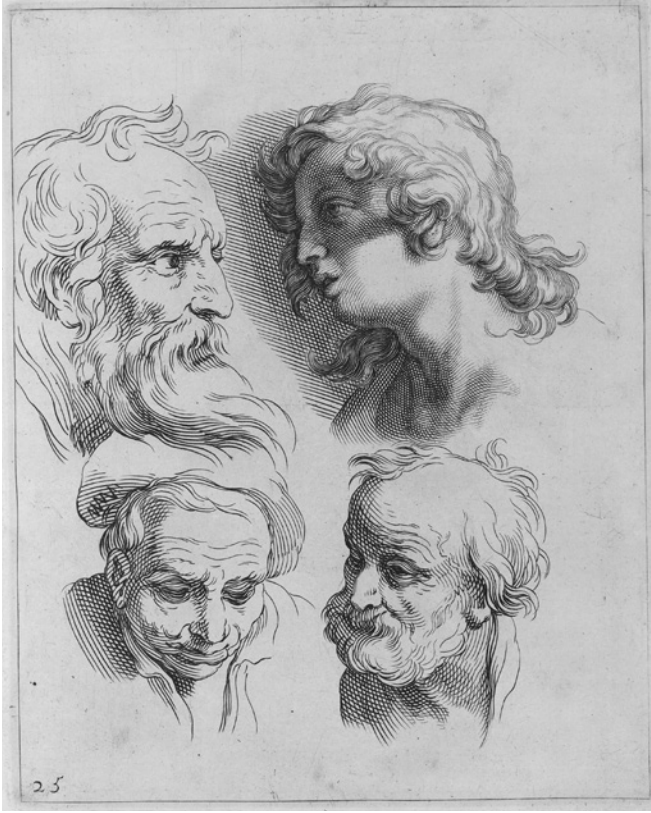


FIGURE 19.4 Frederick Bloemaert after Abraham Bloemaert, "Lesson 20". *Artis Apellae liber* (1650–1656), plate 25. Engraving, 21.5 × 17.4 cm. London, The British Museum, Collection of Prints and Drawings. The Trustees of the British Museum.

jagged-edged nose. The smoothness of the boy's face plays against the wrinkled man, the softness of the youth's indeterminate gaze against the intensity of the man's stare. As these studies make clear, the outlining of eyes, ears and noses in the primary lesson establishes the foundation for the lines, grids, and hatch marks that form faces conveying emotion, passion, and thought.

Amid these studies of fragments, faces, and bodies, the Bloemaerts punctuate their engraved lessons with *chiaroscuros*, including the presentation of *Caritas*.¹¹ As discussed, their representation of *Caritas* stands out through the

11 For an overview of the iconography of *Caritas*, see Freyhan R., "The Evolution of the *Caritas* Figure in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 11 (1948) 68–86.

intimation of discord. Frederik uses the chiaroscuro medium to increase the agitation of the figure, incising sharp angles into the drapery of her garment so that zigzags of white highlights enliven one side of the figure, while articulating the other half of her body with embedded gridded lines. Standing within the taut contours of her drapery, the woman holds an infant in her arms, while two other children frame her body. The infant, as noted above, does not drink from her breast (as in many other renditions of Caritas). Instead the child twists and thrusts an arm away from his body, his down-turned eyes expressive of discontent. One of the children at her side attempts to pull the drapery of Caritas's skirt over his head, shielding himself from the viewer. The other child stands disconsolate, chin tucked in, and gazes at the ground, unengaged with either the mother-like figure or the viewer.

When compared to an almost similar composition of a harmonious Caritas by Bloemaert's contemporary Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617), the discord of the Bloemaerts's *Caritas* becomes distinct. With the same triangular composition, Goltzius depicts Caritas as she lightly balances an infant in her arms, who suckles from her breast [Fig. 19.5]. Framing her figure, two Cupid-like children embrace each other, lightly touching nose to nose. Another child extends dimpled hands to caress the maternal figure, whose hand firmly rests upon his head. Goltzius's rendition of Caritas is playful, with its cherubic children seeking physical contact with Caritas and each other. This image of loving accord becomes verbally manifest in its accompanying inscription that describes the divine love of *agape* (God's redemptive love for mankind) as the bond that brings together all individuals.¹² In contrast to this inscription and Goltzius's rendition of Caritas, Bloemaert's mother and children struggle with one another. Gone is the motif of suckling, and the playful companion of Goltzius's child has been excised, leaving the lone child to seek shelter. The other child turns away from the viewer, and neither woman nor child touches.

Utrecht and the Long Reformation

The Bloemaerts's discordant representation of Caritas may be contextualized within the process of 'confessionalization' in their hometown Utrecht. As a practicing Catholic in a city that was once one of the major archbishoprics north of Italy, Abraham Bloemaert was personally and professionally affected by the Reformed government's edicts forbidding the celebration of the Roman

12 'Omnia Dia Agape divino nectit amore, / Et superis vinco nos proprio ligat' ('The blessed agape [Greek term for Caritas] binds all things in divine love and joins us closer to God'.)



FIGURE 19.5 Hendrick Goltzius and Claes Jansz. Visscher (II), "Caritas" (1585–1589). Engraving, 21.8 × 14.3 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-27.294.

mass. Born in 1566, the year of the iconoclastic riots, Bloemaert made his career during a pivotal period of religious conflict in the Netherlands, a struggle that resulted over the course of his lifetime in the establishment of core divisionary doctrines. These doctrines, or 'confessions', formed the Catholic, Calvinist, and Lutheran (among many other) churches as separate institutions.¹³ The

13 From the Latin *confessio*, confession was the official doctrine that churches developed in the wake of the Reformation to define their beliefs regarding key points of contention, such as the Eucharist, Baptism, and the nature of death. For the literature on

confessions served to clarify the positions of each respective church on the Eucharist, baptism, death, and resurrection, and defined by catechetical means how an individual comes to know God and interacts with the Word, the body of Christ, and the sacred image. Although Bloemaert was Catholic, reading his practice and drawing book through his religious beliefs limits our perception of his oeuvre. Instead it makes more sense to consider how the confessionalization of the formerly united body of the Christian church in the Netherlands created the circumstances in which artists (regardless of confession) addressed the role of perception and faith in daily life, different conceptions of discernment often coalescing around the taste, touch, and smell of the wafer and wine of the Eucharist.

Whether the Eucharist was seen as the total conversion of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ or as a symbol, the sensory qualities of the wafer and wine were fundamental to both Catholics and Calvinists. The Council of Trent and the "Tridentine Profession of Faith" (1564) set down the written accords for the Catholic Church and maintained that the Eucharist is a *conversionem totius substantiae*: the priest's blessing changes the wine and bread into the blood and body of Christ. In contrast, the States-General (the legislative body of the Dutch government) declared: 'In order to represent the spiritual and heavenly bread to us, Christ decreed an earthly and

'confessionalization', see Schilling H., *Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society: Essays in German and Dutch History* (Leiden – New York: 1992) 305–427; Geyl P. "De protestantisering van Noord-Nederland", *Leiding* 1 (1930) 111–123; and Rogier L.J., *Geschiedenis van het katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de zestiende en zeventiende eeuw*, 3 vols. (Amsterdam: 1945–1947). For important revisions to the 'confessionalism' thesis, see Hsia R.P., *Social discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe, 1550–1750* (London – New York: 1989). For an overview on confessionalism and the Dutch republic, see Mörke O., "'Konfessionalisierung' als politisch-soziales Prinzip? Das Verhältnis von Religion und Staatsbildung in der Republik der Vereinigten Niederlande im 16. Und 17. Jahrhundert", *Tijdschrift voor sociale geschiedenis* 16 (1990) 31–60; Spaans J., *Haarlem na de Reformatie. Stedelijke cultuur en kerkelijke leven, 1577–1620* ('s-Gravenhage: 1989); Kooi C., *Calvinists and Catholics during Holland's Golden Age* (New York: 2012); Frijhoff W., "The Threshold of Toleration: Interconfessional conviviality in Holland during the early modern period," in *Embodied Belief: Ten Essays on Religious Culture in Dutch History* (Hilversum: 2002) 39–65; Parker C.H., *Faith on the Margins: Catholics and Catholicism in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge – London: 2008); Kaplan B.J., *Calvinists and Libertines: Confession and Community in Utrecht, 1578–1620* (Oxford: 1995); Pollmann, J., "The Bond of Christian Piety: The Individual Practice of Tolerance and Intolerance in the Dutch Republic", in Hsia R.P. – Nierop H. van (eds.), *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age* (Cambridge: 2002) 53–71; and eadem, *Catholic Identity and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1520–1635* (Oxford: 2011).

sensory bread, which is a Sacrament of his body'. The Reformed Church in the Netherlands likened the Eucharist to an image or a 'holy drawing' (*heyilige teecken*en), but not to Christ himself.¹⁴ For the Reformed Church, the Eucharist is a 'drawing' that stands before the eyes, a sensory manifestation that represents but is not the body of Christ.

Despite such differences, however, the sensory qualities of the Eucharist were fundamental to both Catholics and Calvinists. For Catholics, the taste, smell, and touch of the Eucharistic wafer and wine testified to the miracle of the conversion. For Calvinists, these qualities were sensed as an 'earthly' sign of Christ's body. The Eucharist was a powerful rite by which to debate varying perceptions of a single experience, for the Eucharist was also the ritual that represented the coming together of the community around and within the body of Christ. In *Corinthians* 12:12, Paul stresses the aggregation of one body: 'As the body is one, and hath many members and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ'. From the writings of theologians such as Thomas Aquinas, the body was seen as a metaphor for the civic state.¹⁵ In the seventeenth century, the question of Caritas became pivotal as this 'single' body of believers fragmented into various confessions. No longer a single body joined together by a 'single' faith, the varying confessions began to 'care for their own', and to enact Caritas or charity for the members within their confession. The act of charity—monetarily or physically helping those in need—was an action that realized in practice that every member of the community must be taken care of for the single body of the faithful to live harmoniously.¹⁶

For the Catholic community in Utrecht, the ability to provide for the members of their confession became financially difficult as the Reformed Church secularized Catholic property. Before the secularization of Catholic property, Utrecht had a cathedral, four collegiate churches, three abbeys, seven

14 *Grootplacate-boeck, vervattende de placated ordonnatien ende edicted van de Staten Generael der Vereenighde Nederlanden, ende van de [...] Staten de Hollandt en West-Vrieslandt, mitsgaders vande [...] Staten van Zeelandt*, vol. III, ed. Simon van Leeuwen ('s-Gravenhage, J. Scheltus: 1683) 414.

15 Kantorowicz E.H., *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton: 1957) 193–232.

16 Alves A.A., "The Christian Social Organism and Social Welfare: The Case of Vives, Calvin and Loyola", *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 20,1 (1989) 6–7. For the 'canonical' study on the role of poor relief in early-modern society and its ability to cross confessional divides, see: Davis N.Z., "Poor Relief, Humanism and Heresy", *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford: 1965) 17–64.

monasteries, twelve convents, and fourteen hospitals.¹⁷ According to a tax assessment of 1585 in the Utrecht Sticht, Catholic institutions owned a quarter of all the land.¹⁸ As one historian argues, the secularization of church property caused both a crisis in 'pastoral ministry' in the seventeenth-century Netherlands, and forced Dutch Catholic leaders to 'reform', that is, reconstruct the church without institutional patronage.¹⁹ The appropriation of Catholic property by the Calvinist republic posed a major challenge to what remained of the Catholic priesthood in Utrecht, creating a financial crisis for the Holland Mission, the missionary network established in the United Provinces in 1592 by Pope Clement VIII.²⁰ Without the revenues from their landed endowments, Dutch Catholics had to find the means to provide for the poor (a necessary pillar of the church).²¹

Moreover, with the secularization of ecclesiastical property came a series of edicts from the States-General prohibiting the rites of the Roman Catholic church, so that 'it might not be against the law to be Catholic, [but] it was nevertheless quite illegal to live and worship as one'.²² Although Utrecht and the Netherlands did not suffer from the violence of the religious wars, living in a multi-confessional city still impacted the social body.²³ As extensive historical work on the trope of Dutch 'tolerance' demonstrates, our contemporary concept of 'religious freedom' remains markedly different from the exercise of toleration as 'a respite from prosecution' that defined early modern religious tolerance.²⁴

17 On the churches of Utrecht, see Hulzen A van., *Utrechtse kerken en kerkgebouwen* (Baarn: 1985). Also cited by Kaplan, *Calvinists and Libertines* 17.

18 Ibid., 115.

19 Parker, *Faith on the Margins* 4–5.

20 Ibid., 191.

21 Ibid., 230.

22 Ibid., 10–11.

23 On Catholic community and the Eucharist, the body sacred and the body social, see Davis N.Z., "The Sacred and the Body Social in Sixteenth-Century Lyon", *Past & Present* 90 (1981) 40–70. Historians differ on the impact of confessionalism for the social body in Utrecht. In a study of the Reformed church, Benjamin Kaplan argues that through 'units of community' such as the neighborhood, the parish and the confraternity, Utrechters maintained an interwoven multiconfessional society. Kaplan's analysis illustrates that the concerns of citizens may not be seen as 'Protestant' or 'Catholic' but instead transcend these religious divisions. See Kaplan, *Calvinists and Libertines* 291: 'In such matters, an a-confessional but distinctly Christian religious church seems to have operated. Non-ecclesiastic units of community translated this culture into an active vital force'.

24 Parker, *Faith on the Margins* 3. For the extensive literature on 'tolerance' in the Dutch Republic, see Berkens-Stevelinck C. – Israel J. – Postumus Meyjes G.H.M. (eds.), *The*

This problem of 'toleration' and the increasingly complex and even conflicted relationship between the public space of law and the private space of conscience became directly relevant for Abraham Bloemaert, citizen of Utrecht. In particular, Bloemaert's private celebration of the Eucharist in his home according to the doctrines of the Catholic Church became a public case for judiciary action and defamation. As the Italian biographer Filippo Baldinucci (1624–1697) reports, the Jesuits celebrated the Eucharist daily in Bloemaert's home until the governmental authorities forcibly entered Bloemaert's home during one such Mass. For this offense, the city magistrates charged a fine, and Bloemaert was harassed to the point that an anonymous person penned a defamatory book about him.²⁵ This episode from Bloemaert's biography demonstrates the personal difficulties he encountered as a practicing Catholic under a Reformed government. On the other hand, Baldinucci describes Bloemaert as 'not just a Catholic, but a pious Christian man' (*non solamente buon cattolico, ma uomo di sì Cristiana pietà*). Baldinucci's summation of Bloemaert—a good Catholic and a man of piety—illustrates that both Catholicism and *pietas* were fundamental to Bloemaert's social identity.

Bloemaert collaborated with the Jesuit order and the Holland Mission, designing work for these institutions and participating in their efforts to rebuild the Catholic Church in the United Provinces. He was a successful artist and respected member of the Saint Luke's Guild in Utrecht, who worked with fellow artists of many different confessions.²⁶ Although he was persecuted as

Emergence of Tolerance in the Dutch Republic (Leiden: 1997); Voogt G., *Constraint of Trial: Dirck Volckertszoon and Religious Freedom* (Kirkville: 2000); Kaplan B.J., "Dutch' Religious Tolerance: Celebration and Revision", in *Calvinism and Religious Toleration* 8–26; Kooi C., "Paying off the Sheriff: Strategies of Catholic Toleration in Golden Age Holland", in *Calvinism and Religious Toleration* 87–101; and Frijhoff W., "The Threshold of Toleration: Interconfessional Conviviality in Holland during the Early Modern Period", in *Embodied Belief* 39–66, here. 65. For recent work on painting and tolerance, also see Eck X. van – Priem R. (eds.), *Traits of Tolerance: Religious Tolerance in the Golden Age* (Zwolle – Utrecht: 2013).

25 Baldinucci F., "Notizie di Abraam Bloemaert", in idem, *Notizie dei Professori di Disegno*, vol. 3, ed. P. Barocchi *et al.* (Firenze: 1974–1975) 626.

26 There is an extensive literature on Dutch painting that engages with painters as above all 'businessmen', arguing that their personal faith often had little to do with their official commissions. Xander van Eck, nevertheless, has pointed out that Catholic painters did play an important role in designing altarpieces for the Catholic church in the Netherlands. On confessionalism, painting and Utrecht, see Kaplan B.J., "Confessionalism and its Limits: Religion in Utrecht, 1600–1650", in Spicer J.A. – Federle Orr L. (eds.), *Masters of Light: Dutch Painters in Utrecht during the Golden Age*, exh. cat., Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco; Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (New Haven: 1992) 60–71; Eck X. van,

an avowed Catholic, his *Caritas* cannot solely be read as a Catholic personification. Rather, it needs to be situated within the context of his career as a whole and related to the early modern theology of *Caritas*. Baldinucci's description of Bloemaert as both Catholic and *pious* broadens our appreciation of this particular personification and her evident sorrow. Bloemaert's representation of *Caritas*, as I shall argue, expresses the discordant relation between the Catholic Church and the government of Utrecht, and more broadly, it also responds to the fragmentation of the social body within the city of Utrecht.

One of the major seventeenth-century Dutch theologians, Philippus Rovenius (the apostolic vicar of the Holland Mission) grounds his major tome on piety in a neo-Augustinian reading of *Caritas*, devoting an entire chapter of his *Institutiones Christianae pietatis libri quator* (1635) to charity. For Rovenius, *Caritas* is the highest and most perfect of the virtues and offers rest to the mind.²⁷ Rovenius stresses how charity unites body and soul to God, connecting the separate members of the Christian community as neighbors.²⁸ Just as the individual's body and soul unite into a harmonious whole when the person turns toward God, so too, the disparate members of the communal body are brought into harmony through the realization of *Caritas*. The analogy between the Christian's body and the embodied community and church underlies or, better, informs Bloemaert's personification *Caritas*.

After the fragmentation of religious beliefs and confessions in the wake of the Reformation, individual members of Dutch society could no longer be united by belief, but they could still find harmony as a community in piety. In the *Artis Apellae liber*, Bloemaert and his son Frederik present a theory of images and image-making grounded not in *Catholicism* but *piety*. The printed drawing book, as a kind of artistic *civitas*, teaches the student to draw the body. It proffers a plurality of fragmented body parts that the student is expected to assemble into single figures that are unified, balanced, and whole. Within the *Artis Apellae liber*, especially as regards the inclusion of religious imagery and theological virtues such as *Caritas*, Abraham and Frederik suggest that to

"The Artist's Religion: Paintings Commissioned for Clandestine Catholic Churches in the Netherlands, 1600–1800", *Simiolus* 27 (1999) 70–94; and idem, *Clandestine Splendor: Paintings for the Catholic Church in the Dutch Republic* (Zwolle: 2008).

27 Rovenius Philippus, *Institutionum Christianae pietatis libri quatuor* (Antwerp, Ioannem Cnobbaert: 1635) 1001: 'Charitas virtutum omnium maxima & perfectissima est, finis & forma caeterarum & mentis nostrae summa perfectio, radix & principium meritorum'.

28 Ibid., 1002: 'Charitas etiam est perfectio nostra, quia Deo nos unit, ultimo sini nos copulat, & animam nostram in Deum transformat, membra Christi viventia nos faciens, & aliis membris, id est proximis nostris nos connectens'.

join the divided parts of the human body into a well-proportioned whole, the draftsman must move beyond the sensory realm. This is the metaphysical position, as the book's chiaroscuro indicates, that shores up, indeed justifies the manual practice of drawing.

The first twenty lessons of the *Artis Apellae liber* progress from the sensory, through the literal pictorialization of body parts pertaining to the senses, as seen in lesson one, to the suprasensory, as realized in the closing chiaroscuro to part one. While the opening chiaroscuro print of the draftsman in the studio is followed by the types of sensory and bodily fragments the student would draw—from eyes and ears to limbs and torsos—the closing chiaroscuro print of the *Artis Apellae liber*'s first section demonstrates a movement away from the sensorial study of bodily parts. The Bloemaerts close the first section of their printed drawing book with a saint in prayer [Fig. 19.6]. This saint, too, has a book before him, like the student working from the printed drawing book. Only in this image, the saint turns away from the book and towards the light emanating from the corner of the print. Like bookends, the two chiaroscuros framing the first section of the Bloemaerts's drawing book present two different understandings of light and shadow in artistic practice: one physical and the other metaphysical.

Bloemaert and Frederik begin their pedagogical work by showing a draftsman in the studio [Fig. 19.1]: this chiaroscuro exemplifies the importance of studying light and shadow as a way of producing three-dimensional effects on paper. The draftsman and engraver, father and son, then conclude this first section of the drawing book by showing an alternative source of light, study, and solitude: a saint kneeling in prayer. The devout figure gazes away from the book on his lectern toward something not located within his immediate surroundings, a force that remains beyond the realm of representation. Instead, his illuminative gaze has turned inward, as pictorialized by the white light emanating from the crown of his head. Both the draftsman and the saint are isolated, having secluded themselves from worldly distractions as they set about the task of studying sculpture or scripture. The young draftsman inhabits the studio, where he analyzes shifting light on the surfaces of bodies and things. The saint, on the other hand, rather than observing the physical properties of light, awaits the bestowal of the light of grace. Although both the student of this drawing book, for whom the protagonist in the opening chiaroscuro functions as a proxy, and the saint initiate their studies in solitude by engaging with a book, both will ultimately put it down. Once the drawing student becomes a master draftsman, he will draw *uyt den gheest* (from intellect and memory). In turn, the saint looks away from his book once grace as light touches him and permeates his body. The chiaroscuro prints in the Bloemaerts's work put



FIGURE 19.6 *Frederick Bloemaert after Abraham Bloemaert, "Saint in Prayer". Artis Apellae liber (1650–1656), plate 20. Engraving and woodcut, 18.5 × 15.3 cm. London, The British Museum, Collection of Prints and Drawings.*

IMAGE © THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

into play two different types of light—one material, one metaphysical. The pedagogical program put forward in the *Artis Apellae liber* begins with sensory perception, and then, through the first pair of chiaroscuro woodblock prints, moves from the physical to the metaphysical, from the sensory to the suprasensory. Nevertheless, as the presence of Caritas reminds the user of the Bloemaerts's printed drawing book, the registers of the sensory and suprasensory remain inseparable. The realization of Caritas in actions of charity

held material consequences in the temporal world and immaterial possibilities in the eternal realm.²⁹

A Face to Something Not Human

While the confessionalization of Utrecht provides one possible context for the Bloemaerts's discordant representation of Caritas, the question remains why the theological virtue of charity would be relevant within a printed drawing book—especially a representation of Caritas evocative of emotional discord. As I have argued above, the physical practice of drawing, in which the draftsman studies dismembered bodily parts in order to reconcile them into a unified body, functions as an artisanal trope for unification that resonates with Paul's description of the separate members of the Church united in the body of Christ. Yet in order to contextualize the role of a personification of Caritas in a printed drawing book and its possible pedagogic purpose, it is first necessary to consider how personification as a rhetorical device was understood in the seventeenth century.

Bloemaert's English contemporary Henry Peacham (1546–1634), also the author of a printed drawing book, *Gentleman's Exercise* (1634), describes personification in his treatise on rhetoric, *The Garden of Eloquence* (1577), as making 'a commonwealth to speake'. For Peacham, personification raises 'as it were the dead to life, and bringeth them forth complaining or witnessing what they knew'.³⁰ But personification, or *prosopopoeia*, not only makes a 'commonwealth' speak but also presents faces and bodies that are absent. Personification produces senseless and 'dumbe' things filled with the qualities of sentience and presence.

While Peacham is admittedly not one of the major 'Netherlandish' art theorists such as Karel van Mander, his dual attention to draftsmanship and rhetoric in his two treatises mirrors similar concerns for how to 'make the absent speak' whether in word or image. Peacham clearly states the connection between the arts of painting and oratory when he compares the orator to a 'cunning

29 As Muller argues with regard to Erasmus' *Imitatio Christi*. Muller, 'Charitas' and 'Naastenliefde' in the Seventeenth Century 47–48: 'If a man wants to live in a world in which Christian ethical values prevail, he must not stop at the visible things but constantly seek to refer them to analogies within the invisible world. As a consequence of doing this, he will be able to embrace visible, temporal things in the spirit of one guided by invisible values, the first of which is *caritas*—the love of God and the desire to benefit all mankind'.

30 Peacham Henry, *The Garden of Eloquence* (London, H. Jackson: 1577) 136–137.

painter'. The orator must look towards the painter to grasp how 'cunning and curious Images are made so like to the persons which they present, that they do not onely make a likely shew of life, but also by outward countenance of the inward spirite and affection'.³¹ The task of both painting and oratory is to bring forth life, conveying not only outward characteristics but also 'inward spirits and affections'. The painter (or the orator) must fabricate before the audience an object for contemplation, or as Peacham writes, bring 'forth to the contemplation of man's mind'. And like the orator, the painter must body forth a great variety of human emotion. Peacham enumerates the affective variety of faces to be set before a viewer for his contemplation:

[...] some grave, some smiling, some angry, some weeping, some young, some old, some asleepe, some dead, also in their degrees, as Princes and subjects, magistrates and prisoners, riche men and beggars, men of artes and occupations, ladies, gentlemen, maidens, old women, captains, soldiers, finally all kind of persons in their countenance, gesture and apparell.³²

The key to this art of describing persons in their variety is *prosopopoeia* (personification) and *prosopographia* (description of persons), the predominant figures of description in early modern rhetorical treatises. In *De ultraque verborum ac rerum copia* (1512), Erasmus also establishes *prosopopoeia* and *prosopographia* as the necessary means by which to describe persons and to recreate the speaking voice of a character defined by historical or literary tradition.³³ Whether delineating an historical personage or an abstract concept, both figures have the ability vividly to present and enliven a voice, figure, and face.

This shared art of giving a bodily and facial form to an historical person (*prosopographia*) and an abstract concept (*prosopopoeia*) so that they seem sensorially present before a viewer continues in the work of the French theologian Bernard Lamy (1640–1715) and his canonical *The Art of Speaking* (1675), in which Lamy equates the use of rhetorical figures to the 'touches and lines' by which a painter expresses 'the thoughts and passions of the person whom he draws'.³⁴ This is not to say that Lamy influenced the Bloemaerts's

31 Ibid., 134.

32 Ibid., 134–135.

33 Erasmus D., "Book II", in idem, *On Copia of Words and Ideas / De utraque [sic] ac rerum copia*, trans. D.B. King – H.D. Rix (Milwaukee: 1963).

34 Lamy B., "The Art of Speaking", in Harwood J.T. (ed.), *The Rhetorics of Thomas Hobbes and Bernard Lamy* (Carbondale: 1986) 224.

understanding of personification, particularly in relationship to their image of Caritas. Instead Lamy demonstrates how artistic production provided valuable metaphors for elucidating properties of verbal rhetoric; both artists and orators were seen to make present for viewers that which was absent. Drawing and painting were analogous practices capable of making 'dead men' appear 'as if they were living', and speak 'as if they had souls'.³⁵ For Lamy, *prosopopoeia* and *prosopographia* awaken the viewer so that the 'Eyes of the Mind' are opened.³⁶ Men 'shut all the Ports of their Senses, that she [Truth] may not enter into their Minds, where she is receiv'd with so much indifference, that she is forgot as soon as she is receiv'd'.³⁷ Through the Passions, 'Truth' reaches the heart: 'The Passions are the Springs of the Soul: It is they which cause it to act: It is either Love, or Hatred, or Fear, or Hope, which counsels and determines us'. Just as Peacham clarifies how the painter or orator must make present a face for the beholder to scrutinize and meditate, so Lamy argues that these delineations of the passions are figures that 'imprint' themselves in men's minds. These 'imprints' allow the viewer to discover the object of his passion and to pursue it with love: 'We have seen how Figures do imprint strongly; how they illustrate, and how they explain: We must use them in the same manner to discover the Object of the Passion which we have a mind to inspire, and to make a lively Picture that expresses all the Features and Lineaments of the said Object'.³⁸

The interwoven arts of *prosopopoeia* and *prosopographia*, as seen in a wide range of seventeenth-century rhetorical treatises, also drive the drawing lessons within the Bloemaerts's *Artis Apellae liber*.³⁹ While I have discussed only two

35 Ibid., 234.

36 Ibid., 244.

37 Ibid., 246.

38 Ibid., 247.

39 Discussions of *prosopopoeia* and *prosopographia* fall under the heading of 'tropes and figures' and primarily appeared in manuals dedicated to the categorization of 'tropes and figures'. Other such manuals, include Schade Peter, *Tabulae de schematibus et tropis P. Mosellani in rhetorica* (London, Ioannis Kyngstoni: 1516); Melanchthon Philippus, *Instituiones rhetoricae* (Leipzig, Valentini Schuman: 1521); Talon Omer, *Rhetoricae libri duo* (Oxford, Iosephus Baresius: 1548); Scaliger Julius Caesar, *Poetices libri septem* (Lyon, Antonium Vincentium: 1561); and Verepaeus Simon, *Praeceptiones de figuris seu de tropis et schematibus* (Cologne, Gerunum Calenium, & Haer. Quentelios: 1582). For an overview of these manuals (and others), see Mack P., *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric 1380–1620* (Oxford: 2011) 208–227. For a good overview of the importance of the *rederijerskamers* (chambers of rhetoric) in the Netherlands and its influence on artists, see: Koopmans J. – Meadow M.A. – Meerhoff K. – Spies M. (eds.), *Rhetoric – Rhétoriqueurs – Rederijers* (Amsterdam etc.: 1995).

treatises, Peacham's and Lamy's, they belong to a wider seventeenth-century rhetorical discourse that defined *prosopopoeia* as 'making the dead speak' and 'bringing to life those who are absent'. The ability to 'make present that which is absent' is a skill necessary both to the embodiment of abstract concepts and the visual description of persons. Peacham and Lamy turn to the art of painting to elaborate upon the art of oratory because the study of faces seemed the domain of the painter. While painters such as Bloemaert do not verbally discuss the arts of personification and the description of persons, their drawing book specifically teaches the art of representing persons as though they were present. In their printed drawing manual, the Bloemaerts visualize ideas that are established in seventeenth-century rhetoric, namely, the art of giving life to absence, the ability to bring forth faces that appear present. Conversely, no work could be seen more clearly to elaborate upon this assumption than a printed drawing book dedicated to the representation of the human figure and face. Just as Peacham outlines the variety of human faces, relating the emotions—'grave, smiling, angry, weeping, young, old, asleep, and dead'—to character—'Princes, and subjects, magistrates and prisoners, rich men and beggars, old women, captains and soldiers', so the faces in the *Artis Apellae liber* depict this range of emotions and characters.

To consider just one example among many, in lesson 4 the Bloemaerts illustrate the strokes and figures necessary to conveying age and youth, gravity and levity. Four heads and two hands compose the lesson [Fig. 19.7]. Two of the heads analyze the same aged woman in two separate profiles. Through different gradations of strokes with his burin, Frederik brings the head into two separate forms of relief. In one study, outline dominates and a few parallel incisions on her cheek face and neck convey both her age and the inward turn of her thoughts. In contrast, another study of the same face presents her head with deeper shades of line and hatch marks, so that her face comes into fuller relief. Slight degrees of difference in contour and texture reveal an equally elusive shift in mood and character. Against these two studies of age, the Bloemaerts juxtapose two faces of young men. Quick pen sketches describe the soft curling hair of these youths, one lightly smiling with his eyes downcast, the other with upturned gaze and an expression of anxiety or fear.

The sensory fragments that introduce the printed drawing book, as seen in the opening lesson [Fig. 19.3], are the tools with which the systematic study of passions and character is aggregately constructed. But as the treatises of Lamy and Peacham make clear, these pictures of faces are ultimately objects of contemplation, meant to be cognized by the visual intelligence of an attentive beholder. Personification and the description of persons, descriptive figures prevalent in the rhetorical arts (along with *ekphrasis* and *hypotyposis*), are



FIGURE 19.7 *Frederick Bloemaert after Abraham Bloemaert, "Lesson 9". Artis Apellae liber (1650–1656), plate 9. Engraving, 21.3 × 12.7 cm. London, The British Museum, Collection of Prints and Drawings.*

IMAGE © THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

crucial components of the painter's toolbox, as seen in the *Artis Apellae liber*. The Bloemaerts center their lessons on the motions of the eyes and the face, by which 'dead men' are made to appear sentient, 'as if they had souls', and faces are portrayed 'as if they were living'. Moreover, the presence of Caritas personifies this dual play between *prosopopoeia* and *prosopographia* in a way that no other personification could because Caritas held a specific role

in seventeenth-century pedagogy from works as diverse as Francis Bacon's (1561–1626) *The Advancement of Learning* (1605) to popular emblem books, such as the Flemish painter and theorist Otto van Veen's (1566–1629) *Amoris divini emblemata* (1615). For it is through the embodiment of Caritas in the artist's practice that he gains the ability to endow personification and faces with a simulated presence of existence.

Eye Hath Not Seen, Nor Ear Heard

In *The Advancement of Learning*, Bacon asserts that Caritas is 'the sole legitimate end of learning'.⁴⁰ Bacon binds the pursuit of knowledge to the virtue of Caritas, adducing exploration of the world as a means to apprehend the relationship between one's self and God. In a complementary fashion, the mathematician theologian Blaise Pascal (1623–1662) endorses the Augustinian doctrine that charity is the highest order of knowledge.⁴¹ In his "Proofs of Jesus Christ", Pascal designates three orders: the material (defined by wealth and things); the intellectual (the pursuits of the mind); and the supernatural (belonging to charity).⁴² Pascal's three orders align with three different modes of perception. The eyes are used for the carnal or material order; the mind for the intellectual; *amor* for the holy.⁴³

Similar to the importance of Caritas as seen in the work of thinkers as divergent as Bacon and Pascal, the opening image in Van Veen's *Amoris divini emblemata* demonstrates the heart's necessary role in perception. Just as the

40 Harrison P., "Curiosity, Forbidden Knowledge, and the Reformation of Natural Philosophy in Early Modern England", *Isis* 92.2 (2001) 280. Bacon quotes *Corinthians* 13:1: "'If I spake', saith he, 'with the tongues of men and angels, and had not charity, it were but as a tinkling cymbal'". Bacon asserts the role of Caritas, for if knowledge 'were severed from charity, and not referred to the good of men and mankind, it hath rather a sounding and unworthy glory than a meriting and substantial virtue'. See Bacon F., *Advancement of Learning*, in Montagu B. (ed.), *The Works of Francis Bacon, Lord Chancellor of England*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia: 1842) I, 163.

41 James S., "Reason, the Passions, and the Good Life", in Garber D. – Ayers M. (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: 1998) 1386–1391.

42 Pascal B., "Preuves de Jésus-Christ", in Armogath J.R. – Blot D. (eds.), *Pensées sur la religion et sur quelques autres sujets* (Paris: 2011).

43 Bold S.C., *Pascal Geometer: Discovery and Invention in Seventeenth-Century France* (Geneva: 1996) 99.

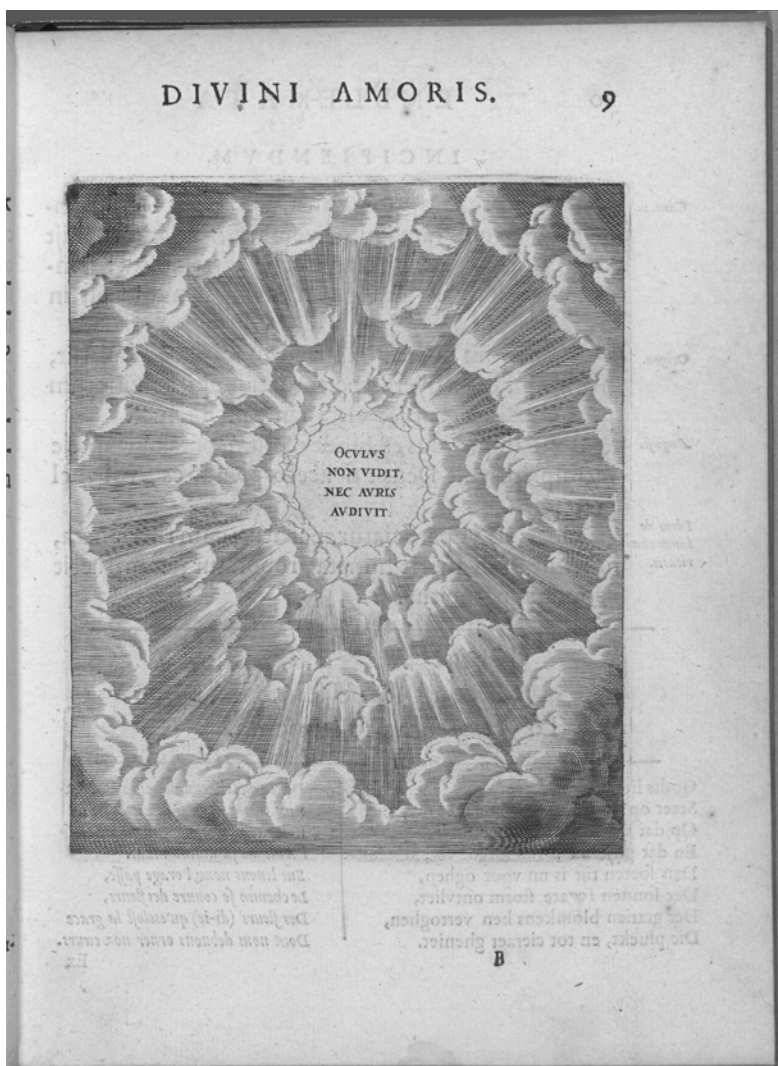


FIGURE 19.8 Otto van Veen and Gijbrecht van Veen, "Oculus non vidit". Amoris divini emblemata (Antwerp, Ex officina Plantiniana Balthasaris Moreti: 1615), plate 1. Engraving, 13 × 11 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

eyes are the organs of sight, so the heart is the organ of Caritas. A cupola of clouds forms a dome, in which Van Veen engraves the phrase 'oculus non vidit, nec auris audivit' ('Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard') from *Corinthians* 2:9 [Fig. 19.8]. Sensory knowledge is limited, whereas the power of the heart as a conduit to comprehension is infinite: 'But as it is written, Eye hath not

seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him'. Only through love of God (Caritas) can divine knowledge enter the heart. This is Lamy's concern when he discusses the ability of higher 'Truths' to penetrate the heart through the art of description, namely through personification and description of persons. As Lamy contends, the senses are often closed, and the eyes of the mind must needs be opened. For these 'eyes of the mind' to open, an object that arouses the passion of love must be set before the viewer. In the rhetorical tradition, the vivid description of the passions written on faces has the power to incite like passions in the beholder, ideally arousing the passion of love in its highest form—*amor Dei*. Furthermore, the discourse of Caritas insists that *amor Dei* may be attained through *amor proximi*.

In the meditative tradition, the ideal image or 'face' to contemplate is that of Christ. Inspired by the love and devotion issuing from gazing upon the Holy Face, the viewer's soul moves closer to God. As Walter Melion's explication of Van Veen's emblem book argues, staring upon the image of Christ's face is generative of divine love (Caritas). Melion describes the motions of the heart that sees Christ: 'If the power of love compels the lover constantly to behold the object of affection, it also increases the desire to see again what we have once seen.'⁴⁴ It is not enough merely to gaze at the image. One must also love the subject portrayed, in order to summon up the experience of Caritas. Van Veen's opening emblem suggests, like Pascal's third order of perception, that the action of beholding one's beloved, though it may involve an outer image (perceptible to the senses), ultimately mobilizes the internal senses and takes place within the heart. But as the personification of Caritas makes clear, it is not only through love of God that one moves closer to him, but also through love of one's neighbor. *Prosopographia* and *prosopopoeia* are the instruments through which *amor proximi* may be considered and implemented, as a way of achieving and intensifying *amor Dei*. In place of staring upon Christ's face, the study of the faces of one's 'neighbors', the inquiry into characters of paupers to princes, the aged and the young, offers a way of feeling the kind of devotion and love that one experiences more intensely when looking upon Christ's face.

The close rhetorical connection between *prosopopoeia* and *prosopographia* posits a necessary relationship between 'giving face' in a personification, such as the rendition of the Bloemaerts's *Caritas*, and describing the full range of emotions and characters experienced by persons. Both figures have the ability to make embodied and present what is absent, whether an abstract concept

44 Melion W.S. *The Meditative Art: Studies in the Northern Devotional Print, 1550–1625* (Philadelphia: 2009) 339–340.

(such as charity) or a person. This ability to make present was contingent not only upon the habitual skill of the draftsman's pencil but also upon a 'higher' order of knowledge. In activating the sensation of presence, it was incumbent upon the draftsman to move beyond the register of sense perception. Like the student of the *Artis Apellae liber* who progresses from the opening images of sensory fragments to the chiaroscuro image of the saint in contemplation, the draftsman is expected finally to set down the book and become the recipient of a different order of light. The structure of the *Artis Apellae liber* outlines this movement from the realm of the sensory to the 'higher orders of knowledge'. As theologians and thinkers as varied as Rovenius and Bacon argue, Caritas, learning to love one's neighbor as an expression of one's love of God, is the method to reach this higher form of awareness. If staring upon an image or icon of Christ's face incites devotion to God, converting him more fully into the 'object' of one's love, meditating upon the face of one's 'neighbor' incites *amor proximi* as a complement to *amor Dei*.

In a printed drawing book dedicated to the study of fragmented faces and bodies, the Bloemaerts use the personification of Caritas to 'give a face' to an abstract theological concept that becomes physically realized in the process of draftsmanship. For the practice of uniting divided facial parts to form a single face capable of conveying emotion, thought and presence was dependent upon the draftsman's ability to access a form of knowing beyond the eyes, ears, noses, and mouths that are comprised by faces. The practice of learning in the *Artis Apellae liber* requires the draftsman to meditate upon 'giving a face' to something not human, to someone no longer present, to raise the dead and bring them back to the living, to bring forth presence in the face of bodily absence.

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PART 7

Personifying Life and Afterlife, Trial and Retribution



The Duchess and the Cadaver: Doubling and Microarchitecture in Late Medieval Art (with Alice Chaucer and John Lydgate)

Elizabeth Fowler

Like the trope of personification, the medieval tomb effigy is often viewed as primitive, but I shall argue here that they are both examples of highly citational and figuratively complex art. In this essay I shall consider the effigy as a form of personification, a species of that mode of literary characterization so dominant in medieval writing and interpretation. Examples of both written character and sculpted effigy offer a potent script to their living human readers, guidance in a response that engages the imaginative faculties as well as the whole body. By considering the tomb of Alice Chaucer and its microarchitecture (especially the tropes of window and roof) at some length and then, more briefly, a poem by John Lydgate, I hope to draw attention to the rich artistic intricacy and interactive aspects of personification itself, in both sculpture and text.¹

The Interactivity of the Human Figure

In the latter part of the fifteenth century, while in her late sixties, the very wealthy Duchess of Suffolk appears to have commissioned a tomb for her own use.² She was a powerful magnate and veteran of the political wars of the English aristocracy. She was also a patron of the poor; forty years earlier,

* I am grateful to A.C. Spearing and to the editors, Bart Ramakers and Walter Melion, for helpful responses to this work.

1 For work on the 'interactivity' of memorial sculpture, see Valdez del Álamo E.V. – Pendergast C.S. (eds.), *Memory and the Medieval Tomb* (Aldershot: 2000).

2 For Alice's life, I rely throughout on Archer R.E., "Chaucer, Alice, Duchess of Suffolk (c. 1404–1475)", in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: 2004), online edition, May 2011, <http://www.oxforddnb.com>, accessed 24 June, 2014. Saul N., *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages: History and Representation* (Oxford: 2009) 298–299, suggests that the details of the monument show Alice's close involvement in the commission.

in the year she inherited from her parents, she and her husband founded the parish church of St. Mary the Virgin, rebuilding it from rubble, and erected an adjoining grammar school and a cloistered housing project for the small village of Ewelme, Oxfordshire. Here she had inherited Ewelme Palace (now no longer standing) through her mother. The almshouse and church form a chantry complex, by means of which she recruited a large cast of people to pray for her and her family's souls in purgatory. By describing the tomb as 'for her own use', I mean not only that the tomb would house her remains after her death, but also that she required it in life as the devotional instrument it so patently is.³ The tomb can still be visited in Ewelme church, where it stands near the more modest joint tomb of her parents, Thomas and Matilda Chaucer.⁴ There the Duchess, Alice Chaucer by birth, the granddaughter of the poet Geoffrey and the patron of his follower John Lydgate, lies in a stunning alabaster monument that shows a mastery of the complex machinery that is the human figure in art, a responsiveness to the high art of the Continent, and a spiritual fortitude or perhaps masochism that is quite shocking. No human being, medieval or modern, could visit her tomb and not be moved.

The way the tomb is intended to be used—what medieval theorists might have called its *ductus*—is apparent even to children, who are close to the floor. The responses of visitors are generated by a program of multiple representations of the human body: human figures are disposed among a series of horizontal layers that are ordered along the vertical axis of the tomb in a meaningful way. A stern, beautiful, life-size effigy lies on top of the casket, but it is positioned at such a height that it is substantially inaccessible to the sight of visitors; standing on the floor of the church one cannot meet the effigy's open eyes or look fully in the austere, enlightened face. Employing the real scale of the human empowers the effigy to refer more directly to its visitors' bodies. The elevation and ornamentation of the effigy suggest the honor of a funeral procession and cause us to strain upwards, drawing us to desire the somewhat

3 Users of such devotional instruments are a newly important focus of writing on material culture. For instance, see the thoughtful discussion of tomb beholders in Saul N., *English Church Monuments* 313–314.

4 Her father Thomas was an exceptionally active and important parliamentarian. Alice chose to be buried at Ewelme near her parents rather than near her powerful third husband, William de la Pole (beheaded at sea in 1450), whose remains she seems to have interred near those of his parents in the collegiate church of St Andrews in Wingfield, Suffolk. For William, see Watts J., "Pole, William de la, first duke of Suffolk (1396–1450)", in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: 2004); online edition, September 2012, <http://www.oxforddnb.com>.



FIGURE 20.1 *Detail of the tomb of Alice Chaucer, Duchess of Suffolk (before 1475). Alabaster and paint. St. Mary's Church, Ewelme, Oxfordshire, England.*

intimidating vision of its beauty.⁵ This Alice has an enviable poise and a curious, somewhat exaggerated face that make the effigy appear individualized and create the impression of verisimilitude [Fig. 20.1].

Yet the effigy cannot be a likeness—it cannot be an imprint of how Alice looked when it was made. Nor can the sculptor have aimed at likeness and failed: it is not badly executed or primitive art. If we moderns find that an effigy or portrait is in some way a stock or stereotyped image, it often seems disappointing—an obstacle to our access to the richness of the subject's true self. So personification may feel thin, badly written, and not, in current idiom, 'relatable'. The face particularly stands for this sort of access in present-day culture, as the cinematic extreme close-up has become synonymous with

5 The English (and then French) royal funerals that used effigies, first in wood and later in verisimilitudinous wax, are thought to have influenced this 'double-decker' style of monument by Kantorowicz E.H., *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: 1957) 420, 434. It may be that the multiple storeys of Alice's tomb would recall such pomp for a contemporary audience.

emotion and personality. But figuration can do so many things; the display of interiority through facial verisimilitude is only one of a vast palette of techniques at the artist's disposal. Here I am most interested in allowing the figure to tell us not how it expresses the subjective experience and self regard of its subject, but how it works with the subjective experience of its viewer, a category that includes any living person who encountered or encounters it, including the duchess herself before her death. This is where the tomb produces the greatest richness of cultural meaning. The effigy is embedded in a microarchitectural program of many human figures, all of which cast spells on the living and create a pattern of bodies to memorialize Alice. She is imagined as a kind of *process* that requires the remains of her body, the many figures on the tomb, and the visitor's body to work together. The effigy above our eye level is only one of what we might call the tomb's moving parts, though they are quite still. The figure's unfleshly, hard, smooth surface and features directly convey abstraction, and the regularity and imperious beauty of her face convey idealization. Likewise, her costume is regular, smooth, and carefully arranged. Its lavishness (of coronet, garter) neatly signifies 'duchess', and its simplicity (of robe, head coverings, praying hands) identifies her as 'vowess'. But let's consider the question of idealization more carefully, not merely as compliment or vanity, as we might think when looking at it in relation to the subject's self. If we take idealization as an aesthetic mode, we can see how the features of the worked alabaster present the figure as an example of personification of a sort of 'ducality'. The effigy is not a picture of the way Alice 'looked' in life so much as it is, like many examples of personification, a figure designed to orient the viewer within social space—the space of the built environment and of the affiliative relations among people and things in late medieval England.

In its idealization, the effigy is designed to orient the viewer to see two hierarchies—that recognized by the college of arms and that recognized by the church—as integrated, vertical, and natural to the human body. So the effigy, then, is 'Alice' only in a strongly abstracted way that acts as the transformation into an artificial person of several points in a complex social web of signification and relation. What we mean by 'duchess' is the embodiment of a position in such a web, a position that is then, very literally, personified in some body for some time—invested in Alice, for instance, as it was by her marriage. To make visible the process of such a personification is to reveal a figure like that of the Ewelme effigy as not the impoverished trace of the person who has left the world of the living, some fossilized footprint, but as a complex sign that is asking its viewers to make visible a rich virtual world all around them.

Closer to our eye level is the stone sarcophagus itself, which contains Alice Chaucer's remains surrounded by a crowd of winged angels, eight on each



FIGURE 20.2 *Angels on the sarcophagus. Tomb of Alice Chaucer, Duchess of Suffolk (before 1475). St. Mary's Church, Ewelme, Oxfordshire, England.*

long side plus others wrapping around the ends but blocked from sight by the church's structural arch [Fig. 20.2]. The angels have human form, though they are no taller than a human arm. They wear, alternately, gold-hemmed white robes or capes lined with azure peacock feathers that are open to reveal gold-scaled armor, and their faces are animated, sorrowful, and various. Standing barefoot in slightly apologetic postures, each angel defends an interval in the row of columns, a niche sheltered by a double-pointed, gilded canopy and decorated with ornate finials and pinnacles. They raise heraldic shields as if to defend against a view or any other intrusion into the receptacle itself, but their elegant hands are positioned vulnerably towards us, outside the shields. They have the relaxed air of the elect. They are what scholars call 'weepers', there to model mourning, but the effect is that of gatekeepers on guard in chic, expensive dress. As visitors, we are thwarted and invited in the same gesture, instructed to deference and admiration towards the persons codified by the heraldry. The arms displayed on the shields offer a litany to us and the chantry priests and almshouse tenants endowed to pray for the souls of Alice and her

kin.⁶ Below the guardian angels, unshielded by them, is an aligned series of eight open, unglazed windows, which instruct us by their form not to keep out (the performative message of the angels' defensive shields), but to look in.⁷ The windows lie below the standing or sitting sightlines of an adult, just as the upper effigy lies largely above that perspective [Fig. 20.3].

All three primary horizontal planes of the monument employ the language of architecture in little: they are 'storeys' with windows, ceilings, and arches detached from the usual functions of those elements, and mark the tomb as an example of gothic microarchitecture. This architectural strategy should be recognized as a form of allusion: it is a mode very common in ecclesiastical sculpture, painting, and furnishing of the late middle ages, where reliquaries, furniture, jewelry, illuminations, and more all make meaning with differing-scale versions of primary architectural forms. Here I want to stress the importance of such iteration as performative, as inviting the viewer to respond in particular ways. A quotation of window-form instructs us to look through it, because that is what we do with windows. (This is true even for stained church windows placed high overhead, a defining feature of late medieval gothic: they instruct us to look upwards to receive the light of heaven, but they primarily allegorize, rather than offer, the proper functions of windows, e.g., to ventilate, illuminate, and provide views of the world.⁸ We might call them a 'macroarchitectural' feature.) By careful positioning of the tomb's three 'storeys', the sculptor generates a powerful ductile sequence for the viewer. The beauty of the upper level urges us to crane our necks and stand on tiptoe, looking up

6 Morganstern A.M., "The tomb as prompter for the chantry: four examples from Late Medieval England", in Valdez del Álamo – Pendergast, *Memory and the Medieval Tomb* 81–97, argues the connection between heraldic arms and chantry prayers by means of tombs in Oxfordshire and a chantry complex founded by Henry Burghersh (d. 1340), bishop of Lincoln and chancellor of England, Alice's great great uncle, to whom her mother was co-heir.

7 Without quoting precise details, the shape of this fenestration nevertheless strongly echoes the tracery of St Mary's glazed windows and ornate fifteenth-century baptismal font, as well as several carved screens. It may be, too, that the window openings echo the pierced foundations of tombs of saints like Edward the Confessor, which invited pilgrims to penetrate the tomb itself. See Lamia S., "The Cross and the Crown, the Tomb and the Shrine: Decoration and Accommodation for England's Premier Saints", in Lamia S. – Valdez del Álamo E. (eds.), *Decorations for the Holy Dead. Visual Embellishment on Tombs and Shrines of Saints* (Turnhout: 2002) 39–56.

8 Microarchitecture is associated with gothic as early as 1949 in Summerson J., "Heavenly Mansions: An Interpretation of Gothic", reprinted in Summerson J., *Heavenly Mansions and Other Essays on Architecture* (New York: 1963) 1–28. Also see Coldstream N., *Medieval Architecture* (Oxford: 2002) 160–165.



FIGURE 20.3 *The disposition of the tomb of Alice Chaucer, Duchess of Suffolk (before 1475). St. Mary's Church, Ewelme, Oxfordshire, England.*

to the frieze with angels on the carved canopy of the tomb and its pinnacles with more angels, whose faces are just out of reach of our visual focus yet fascinatingly individual and charismatic (a power that was no doubt increased by their original color, but is somewhat diminished by the easy access of camera zoom). And from there our gaze is drawn even higher, by means of the pointing pinnacles, to the clerestory windows and the splendid figures, similarly a bit too far away for our eyes to master, in the carved, paneled ceiling of the church. The lifted posture of longing awe is given to us by the sculpture when we seek to view the ducal effigy.



FIGURE 20.4 *The 'windows' require a penitential posture. Tomb of Alice Chaucer, Duchess of Suffolk (before 1475). St. Mary's Church, Ewelme, Oxfordshire, England.*

This posture yields to its opposite as the ground storey urges us to our knees, the level at which the architectural elements of the tomb most welcome us. Only entirely prostrate, in the abject posture of penitence, can we see through the windows and absorb what they frame [Fig. 20.4]. Here Alice's corpse lies, with its shroud parted to further invite our view, in a frightening state of desiccation. She is naked but for a fold of fabric held by her hand across the loins and displays an emergent structure of bones beneath failing and shrinking



FIGURE 20.5 *The transi effigy inside the 'windows'. Tomb of Alice Chaucer, Duchess of Suffolk (before 1475). St. Mary's Church, Ewelme, Oxfordshire, England.*

flesh [Fig. 20.5]. It seems rather brave to portray oneself this way; vanity is not served. The nakedness of the corpse is not a universal nakedness, but rather exposes the specific, gendered body for anyone to see, her breasts notably there so as, it seems, to be seen as notably wrinkled and deflated. The high forehead—a focus of feminine beauty in her time—is violently corrugated. The face retains the lineaments of the beautiful effigy above, and so is unmistakably designed to be its twin. It is Alice, her dignity subjected to a severe public stripping. Like current 'sexting', the cadaver is designed to provoke fascination by an intimate revelation of *identified* naked flesh. Yet it is deliberately ugly and powerfully repulsive to the viewer. (I notice as I write how I am drawn to the ungendered 'it' and the distancing, unpossessive referents 'the' hand, 'the' forehead, 'the' body—it is harder to stay in the proximal possessive while describing this figure, whereas my attempts to describe the elevated effigy slide easily into 'she' and 'the Duchess's'.) Like its counterpart, the cadaver pointedly retains its reference to Alice herself; it is the mirror opposite of the idealized effigy above, nevertheless this effigy too is a personification. The intimacy of the corpse is a shock to the viewer, and the abasement it involves must have been even more explicit and powerful for Alice herself or for a member of the

parish who belonged to the immediate society around her. Did she want her son, her baker, her priest, her enemies, and her neighbors to see her private, intimate body as hideous, to see her decaying breasts? To see her face in this discomposed gawp or her shapely legs losing their power and being absorbed by the stony qualities of blunt matter? Placed in the posture of penitence, we are invited to feel disgust for her and shame at our intrusion.

The sculptor is brilliant at evoking a sense of subjectivity overtaken by inanimate materiality. And it is achieved in alabaster: an idealizing medium that here curiously idealizes the capacity of flesh to become unalive. The poignancy of the figure's facial expression is that of a face becoming inexpressive, losing self-control, succumbing to the status of mere matter. Personality is relinquished to alabaster as the muscles of her face become the folds of the burial shroud. We do not know how the figure was painted, so cannot tell whether a sharp distinction between the corpse and the shroud was forced by paint, but the worked alabaster would in any case have dissolved such a distinction, as the face and legs, especially, share so remarkably the disposition of the shroud around her. As the face and legs approach the status of drapery, they also painfully, precariously insist on being Alice's. Rather than a mere personification of the event that is death, though it surely is that, the cadaver effigy is a personification of her relinquished flesh, of abandoned being-in-the-flesh, of the deliberate withdrawal of the soul from the sentient self.

The cadaver figure, a 'transi' effigy, is as abstractly debased as the upper effigy is abstractly elevated, and it is clear that the two assume their meaning in relation to one another.⁹ Both are portraits, and they mix equal parts of verisimilitude and idealization in opposed modes: the lower effigy is of a decomposing corpse; the upper is of a public figure at the peak of her composure. The online *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* chose a photograph of the top effigy to represent Alice, but it is as abstract a representation of a sixty-some year old as is the corpse. The effigies are not exactly 'before' and 'after' pictures of death's intervention, because the idealized portrait of Alice above shows maturity without signs of age, perfection without reference to flesh. It is abstract in a way that is designed not to flatter her visually so much as to embody a series of personifications: the Duchess, the Vowess, the Noble Lady, the Devout Laywoman, the Patron, the Resident, the Saint in waiting in her canopy niche. The cadaver also shows what Alice, as a human body, never was: a public display of dramatic, naked submission to a quite different sort of

9 See Saul N., *English Church Monuments* 314, for cadaver monuments. There were some 175 examples in late medieval England according to surviving records, if one counts brasses and other minor uses of the figure. For expansive thinking on meaning and the transi figure, see Binski P., *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (Ithaca: 1996) 139–152.

status as an object, a frightening combination of personality and impersonality, but a body that does not in fact adhere to the protocols of human dissolution. Breasts do not survive longer than muscles and organs, nor does the rigor the cadaver expresses outlast their withering. Eyes of cadavers cannot see, yet these are half open, and they stare at images painted on the low ceiling above, which curiously are impossible for a visitor to see without the prosthesis of a camera (St John the Baptist, Mary Magdalene, the Annunciation). The effigy embodies the flesh that she declares herself willing to leave below, and it personifies Death as an abdication of sentience and sensibility.

Space and the Devotional Instrument

Both effigies are Alice, yet they avail themselves of arguments and instructions as they gesture towards verisimilitude. We are exalted by the upper storey and debased by the lower. The effigies are fully supine, yet they instruct us not to a similar rest, but by turns to worship and penance, joyful awe and terrified sorrow. This ductus reveals the devotional instrument that the tomb constitutes. As its tacked-on metal inscriptions attest, it memorializes the dated death of the Duchess of Suffolk, most serene princess and patron of the church, and asks us to pray for her soul in an act of *prosopopoeia*. But the tomb accomplishes much more than that by proposing to orient visitors' own bodies firmly within the cultural meanings of postures and gestures, of vertical, horizontal, and temporal axes, of the senses and emotions, and of the customs and disciplines of gender, flesh, dress, and class status. The parallel positioning of the two effigies further invites us to puzzle out their relation. They are life-sized, while the ornamental furniture of the tomb works on other scales. The sculpture, carved in alabaster with some paint remaining, reaches toward the church ceiling, yet it has its own multitude of ceilings within it: one in the canopy at the top of the tomb, one 'above' the effigy's head and crown, a linked series of canopies over the angels' heads, and one below the casket available only to the 'sight' of the blind, ground-level corpse. The tiers of its scaled architecture, then, are multiple: a series of layered ceilings parallel to the ground and one, in between, positioned at a ninety-degree angle to the others. The sense of shelter this provides to the figures on the tomb is important, establishing a sphere of protection and so of comfort to the user. The protection is not primarily mechanical, however: there is no rain within St. Mary's, Ewelme; the decorative canopies must be held to signify the institutional protection of the church, a mode of architecture they imitate or quote in micro-architectural form. Indeed, when Alice was widowed for the third time, in 1450, she sought the protection of the bishop by professing lay vows, taking the dress

her upper effigy bears with its wimple and ring, and thus insulating herself from royal political pressure to marry again for the benefit of the Crown. The status of vowess did not require her to relinquish her title, her freedom, her land, or her wealth, and apparently she found the patronage of the bishop preferable to the control of the king.¹⁰ Perhaps this sense of ecclesiastical shelter explains why her tomb employs multiple 'roofs', whereas a transi tomb like that of her contemporary, John FitzAlan, the 14th Earl of Arundel, has only a table to shelter the effigy of the cadaver and support the effigy of the knight.¹¹

The microarchitecture of Alice's tomb, then, supports and confirms its double use of personification, a trope that seems to reign absolutely over the medieval effigy. The strategy is further confirmed by the influence of her parents' tomb, also at St. Mary's, on Alice's own: heraldic shields of the powerful families to which they were connected, each shield framed by a relief arch, surround their joint tomb chest [Fig. 20.6]. A flat brass tablet engraved with the figures of a knight and a lady provides its top. There are no gestures of verisimilitude here; instead, the engraving strives only for the abstractness that indicates personification. The two figures are designed to personify the proper knight and proper lady together with their virtues; they are shown at prayer, standing on a unicorn and a lion, and like other double spousal tombs of the period, these figures represent linked positions in a dynastic fabric, the generative institution that is medieval marriage. The compressed spatial dispositions of both the brass tablet and the carved sides are exploded in the more animated carving of Alice's tomb.¹² Her upper effigy strongly invokes 'the vowess', a personification of the very institutional arrangements that are indicated by

10 See Erler M.C., "Three *Fifteenth-Century Vowesses*", in Barron C.M. – Sutton A.F. (eds.), *Medieval London Widows 1300–1500* (London: 1994), 165–181; and Steuer S., "Identifying Chaste Widows: Documenting a Religious Vocation", in Mitchell L.E. – French K.L. – Biggs D.L. (eds.), *The Ties that Bind: Essays in Medieval British History in Honor of Barbara Hanawalt* (Burlington, VT: 2011) 87–103.

11 FitzAlan's memorial is in the chapel at Arundel Castle. He died in French captivity in 1435 aged only 27, succumbing to a battle wound.

12 The duchess's parents' deaths in 1435 and 1437 coincide with the rebuilding of the church and the erection of the adjoining almshouse for two clergy and thirteen poor men (licensed in 1437 and followed by a grammar school in the forties), all paid for by Alice and her husband, William de la Pole, the Earl of Suffolk. So it is likely that it was done in their honor and perhaps, too, out of their legacy. Alice received a substantial inheritance, including Ewelme Palace, through her mother. See Archer, "Chaucer, Alice" and Goodall J.A.A., *God's House at Ewelme: Life, Devotion and Architecture in a Fifteenth-Century Almshouse* (Aldershot: 2001).



FIGURE 20.6 *Tomb of Thomas and Matilda Chaucer (c. 1434–1437). Stone and brass. St. Mary's Church, Ewelme, Oxfordshire, England.*

the proliferation of sheltering ecclesiastical roofs and ceilings. In the image, even in its leanings towards verisimilitude, we are presented not so much with a portrait of 'a' vowess, but with a personification of the social relation of the vowess to the church. The personification is multiple: it is both the Vowess and the Duchess—not merely Alice, but the social persons she embodied. This is a ducal tomb, in which 'ducality', rather than marital alliance, is elevated and memorialized. Not only does the tomb make explicit social claims that point this out—she wears a ducal coronet and, on her left forearm, the Order of the Garter—but in displaying her heraldry and the arms of other aristocratic families, the angels personify in augmented human form a purported divine agency behind this social distinction, confirmed by the support of other arms-bearers. The claim of status is made, according to the sculpture, not by Alice in the commissioning of the tomb, but by the angels and by others of high standing. Divine and armigerous appointments underwrite Alice's command of the position of the Duchess; the tomb presents itself to those who can read it as a sort of fancy funeral guest book that has been figuratively signed in advance by the aristocrats whose arms appear to surround her.

As they hold the shields, identifying and guarding her remains, the angels also personify Alice's ancestry and position in kinship and social networks. Four smaller angels hold the four corners of the pillow upon which the upper effigy rests its head, signifying by their posture their servile status as attendants of the Duchess. Guardian angels are a common feature of fifteenth-century Books of Hours and were prayed to daily. Like the illuminations that typically accompanied the Office of the Dead in the Hours, which may personify the soul as a naked human body (adult or infant) rising towards heaven out of the dying corpse, Alice's tomb doubles her image [Fig. 20.7]. The pair are switched: here the naked body is the one that remains below to decay, and the dressed ducal body, which bears the coronet, is oriented towards heaven. I think it likely that the tomb relies on these aspirational images of death as well as on macabre *memento mori* images. A claim of social status is implicit in this disposition of the two bodies, and we are well prepared to see such claims in art. If we think of Alice as the artist or author of the tomb, or of the unidentified but superb sculptor as its commissioned artist, then their actions will be well represented as a mix of social claims and pious religious aims. Yet in a sense we already know the results of this analysis, even before it is performed: she claims a high status, and the tomb is legible as religious dogma. Such an account is worth making, but it only initiates our insight into the specific, persisting force of the tomb as an instrument for the use of the living. There is more. The tomb offers us a peculiar configuration of phenomenological states: a set of dead human figures makes a direct appeal to living human bodies. The interactions among

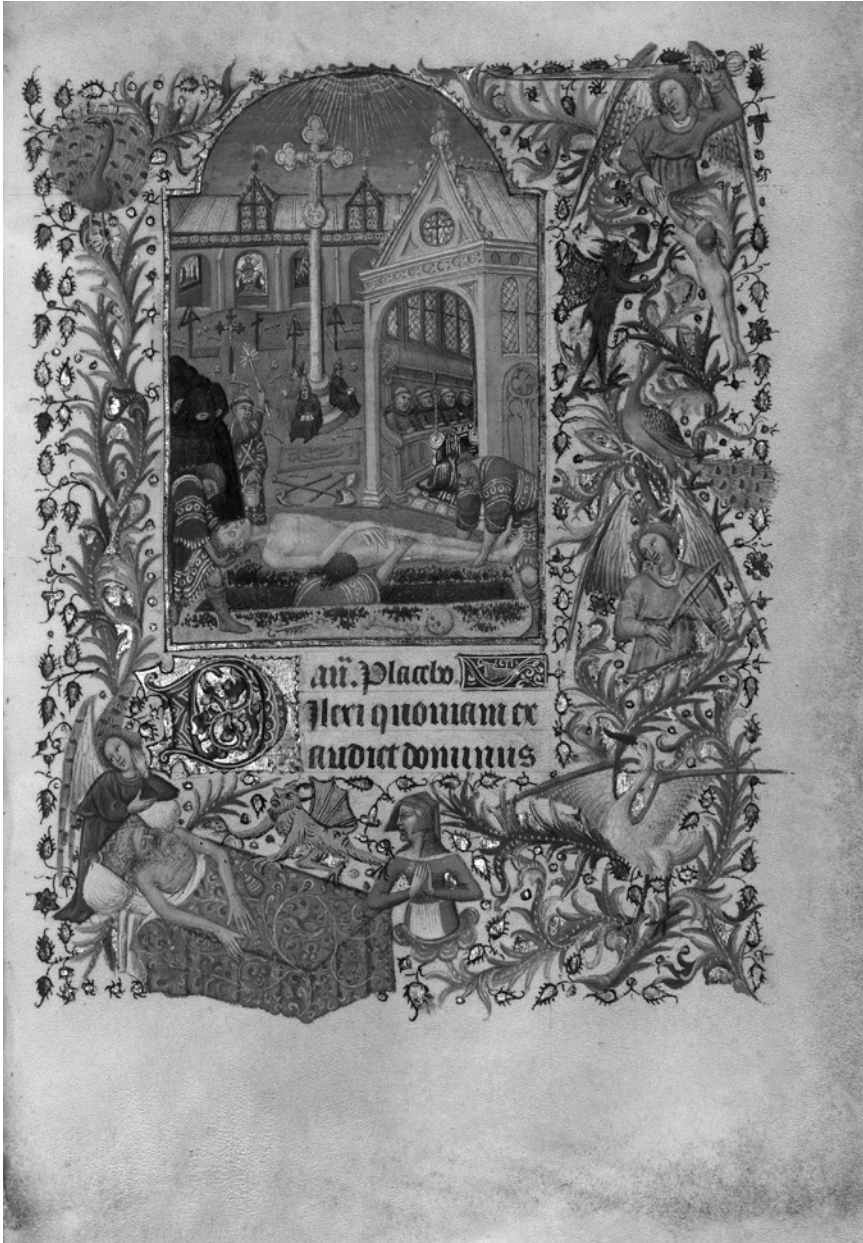


FIGURE 20.7 Spitz Master, *Man dying lower left, his soul ascending in the form of a child guided by an angel, upper right* (Paris, c. 1420). Miniature, tempera colors, gold, and ink on parchment, leaf. 20.2 × 14.9 cm. Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. 57, fol. 194.

COURTESY OF THE GETTY'S OPEN CONTENT PROGRAM.

these bodies of widely differing ontological status are where the power of the tomb lies.

Having sketched some of the responses that the tomb's individual instances of personification solicit from viewers, let's turn now to how these personifications work together in the engine of the tomb's meaning and proffered experience. There is a suggestion in the alabaster tomb that elite social standing is saintly, one confirmed by fifteenth-century English, which uses the same word for divinity and aristocracy in 'worship', the same verb for petitions to the deity and to social betters in 'pray', and the same nouns for religious and feudal authorities in 'lord'.¹³ The effigy of the Vowess Duchess adopts the posture of many sculptures of saints designed for placement on the exterior or interior of contemporary churches. Gravity appears to come horizontally, from the East below Alice's feet, and arranges the drapery accordingly.¹⁴ (Whereas in the drapery of the cadaver, gravity comes up vertically from the floor, just as it does for the living visitor.) The niche that shelters each shield-bearing angel and that we expect to shelter a saint is repeated in the oddly horizontal canopy directly above the ducal head; it is as if she defers to the saints, but only just—as if she is practicing being vertical as she waits to be called to sainthood, perhaps in the resurrection of Doomsday. Does the tomb express a confidence that she will be called *as* a Duchess by those trumpets? That not the fleshly but the social body will be resurrected?

As it works, Alice's tomb acclimatizes the viewer to the vertical axis of its world, a single axis that incorporates both religious and social hierarchy. The sculpture instantiates a strongly ductile space that requires us to orient ourselves on that vertical axis. The instinctual revulsion and pity we feel when faced with a decaying corpse is an engine of our orientation upward here, as is the attraction we are invited to act upon when faced by gold ornament and beauty above us. The revulsion is identified, in the sculptural plan, with penitence by means of the posture in which the windows and corpse position our bodies. Physical abasement is both so simple a dog understands it and so complex that it requires the attention of the culture's most learned and fine minds, who devote treatises to its theology and practice. In whatever order we perform the stages of the salutation scripted by the tomb—and we can now see them clearly as abasement, respectful recognition, and rising admiration—their positions on that vertical axis are clear. The tomb inculcates the ductile space of this vertical axis within us as we encounter it, pointing us

13 All this echoes Latin practice as well as that of other Western vernaculars of the time.

14 Kantorowicz reports Erwin Panofsky terming this sort of figure a 'pseudo-*gisant*', because the drapery is not genuinely at rest. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies* 431–432, n. 383.

toward a prayer practice that is the worship of class status, beauty, and divinity, thoroughly intertwined. The program of bodily attitudes or postures cut into the alabaster encodes a reciprocating program of bodily attitudes for the user of the art—and I see that program as brilliantly sensual, physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and ideological, all at once. The architecture of society itself is legible in the microarchitecture of the tomb, but to see it we must read both the built space of the art *and* the space it encodes for its users—these are wrapped together in a kind of dance that requires performance to produce its meaning. The multiple bodies of Alice's tomb require one more; they are a premonition of it: the living body of the viewer, the user of the tomb.

The three primary figurations of the Duchess of Suffolk, stacked vertically, were no doubt designed for her as a means of practicing her death.¹⁵ The sculpture offers her a way of bringing virtue into her body, and it also gives her a way to begin to relinquish her flesh. The curious device of representing Alice's body in several opposing ways within the unified space of a single piece of art can be seen in other kinds of medieval art, too: it is central to the pictorial device of simultaneous narration, often used in manuscript illuminations or painted altar panels of saints' lives. Visionary scenes, also often associated with horizontal postures, can show multiple bodies to describe dream states or elation—for instance, John being taken up 'in spirit' by an angel in Revelations (e.g., in the Douce Apocalypse), or the poet Dante Alighieri asleep and his soul wandering into his vision [Fig. 20.8].¹⁶ These are not mere 'out of body' experiences, but descriptions of how the body participates in otherness. Perhaps we might even see this conceit in depictions of the Trinity.

The examples I describe clarify how art functions as a primary cultural instrument for instructing the human body how to participate in otherness. The device of figural repetition captures the radical multiplicity of each human being: that a single body is a host to many persons; that a single body transforms utterly throughout its lifetime; that a single body is understood in ways so various that it is often incompatible with itself; that a single body is linked into

15 King P.M., "The English Cadaver Tomb in the Late Fifteenth Century", in Taylor J.M.H. (ed.), *Dies Illa: Death in the Middle Ages* (Liverpool: 1984), stresses the transi tomb as a political rather than devotional choice that signaled Lancastrian connections, but if Lancastrian politics govern its design, it is hard to see why it would have been built at tiny St Mary's or how it would have suited Alice in the late 1460s, since by 1458 she had 'turned her back on the Lancastrian dynasty' (Archer, "Chaucer, Alice") and begun successful negotiations for her son's marriage to the Duke of York's daughter.

16 Bodleian MS. Douce 180, p. 92. See Morgan N., *The Douce Apocalypse: Picturing the End of the World in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: 2006), fig. 70.



FIGURE 20.8 *Master of Antiphonar of Padua, Dante asleep and his soul walking (Padua or Emilia, first half of 14th c.). Miniature, in colors and gold on parchment. 390 × 260 mm. Inferno. London, British Library, Egerton MS 943, fol. 3r. IMAGE © THE BRITISH LIBRARY.*

many social networks, ecological niches, discontinuous biological states, relations, identities, and roles. It will be scarred and decay. Alice Chaucer's tomb is a means of practicing, performing, and incorporating these multiplicities, and it strives for a kind of recognition and even acceptance of the radical discontinuity of human identity as it offers visitors its rather strenuous exercise of the emotions, intellect, and spirit. A woman who buried three husbands, mastered the dynastic survival of the political cataclysms of the fifteenth century, and then saw her only son lose his grip on that achievement might well have learned something she wished to memorialize about the political and spiritual life of the flesh. Art is capable of rearranging the apparent fact that human flesh is individual and unique in order to show the truth of our indistinctness and eccentricity. Personification is its primary strategy in this effort.

Death Speaks to the Princess: John Lydgate's "Daunce of Machabree"

It has often been noted that Alice Chaucer's tomb develops a frankly morbid aesthetic evidenced in earlier French (and a few English) tombs, in Books of Hours, and notably in the topos of the *danse macabre*. This is a theme that

appears in many media and may perhaps have been nearest to the duchess in the form of a poem, “The Daunce of Machabree”, written by her poet-client, John Lydgate, a monk who admired and often imitated her grandfather Geoffrey.¹⁷ Lydgate encountered the dance of death pictorially in Paris, in a mural painted in 1424–1425 along the cloister wall that attached to the charnel houses of the cemetery of the Church of Holy Innocents, and his poem introduces itself as a creative translation of the French poem that accompanied the painting.¹⁸ No doubt the catalog of persons in the General Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales* was a framework that made the dance of death form seem especially rich to Lydgate; the dance could be seen as an offshoot of estates satire in its listing of the persons of the realm. The prologue of the “Daunce” says that Lydgate’s intention is ‘To shew this worlde is but an pilgrimage’ (l. 40), and there are other echoes (for instance, in the description of the ‘fresh’ Squire (l. 217)).

Lydgate’s English poem acquired its own, partnered visual component in a c. 1430 mural, since destroyed, which was commissioned by the prominent city clerk John Carpenter and painted on panels hung inside the northwest cloister at St. Paul’s, London.¹⁹ The Paris original proved contagious across Europe. At its heart is a chilling but, because it’s a dance, somewhat festive multiplication of the human body. A personified Death appears over and over as a skeleton, a speaking body stripped of identity, and encounters a series of persons drawn from throughout society. Like many epitaphs, it proclaims the dead body to

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- 17 Lydgate J., “The Daunce of Machabree”, in Bergen H. (ed.), *The Fall of Princes*, Part III (Washington: 1923) 1025–1044. For her commissions to Lydgate, see Boffey J., “Lydgate’s Lyrics and Women Readers”, in Smith L. – Taylor J. (eds.), *Women, the Book and the Worldly*, vol. 2 (Aldershot: 1995) 142–144. Sophie Oosterwijk has written extensively on cadaver tombs in the context of the dance of death topos. See Oosterwijk S., “‘For no man mai fro dethes stroke fle’: Death and Danse Macabre Iconography in Memorial Art”, *Church Monuments* 23 (2008) 62–87; and idem, “Death, Memory and Commemoration: John Lydgate and ‘Macabrees Daunce’ at Old St Paul’s Cathedral, London”, in Barron C.M. – Burgess C. (eds.), *Memory and Commemoration in Medieval England* (Donington: 2010), 185–201.
 - 18 Appleford A., “The Dance of Death in London: John Carpenter, John Lydgate, and the *Daunce of Poulys*”, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 38,2 (Spring 2000) 285–314, esp. 287. See also Simpson J., who uses the “*Daunce*” to frame his discussion, *The Oxford English Literary History*, vol. 2: 1350–1547. *Reform and Cultural Revolution* (Oxford: 2002) 50–67.
 - 19 Amy Appleford illuminates our sense of the city politics of the Pardon Courtyard space at St Paul’s and what she calls a “collaboration between a poet and a bureaucrat” that brought the dance of Holy Innocents to London in Appleford, “Dance of Death”.

be what you, the reader, will eventually be, no matter who you are. Death is a single character, appearing repeatedly—and yet of course the skeleton really belongs to the person he visits, not to ‘him’ [Fig. 20.9]. The genre and its central use of personification proposes a skeletal unity to our material existence as flesh, one to which all social variety can be reduced. No matter how elevated and imposing people seem, they are all made of bones, and they all die. The goal of such art is to insist that we not try to rise above such debasing features of human existence, but be ready to embrace them. It does this by scripting a practice of response.

We can see the practice in part through the way that the *danse macabre* borrows from contemporary prayer practices. The list that serves as the backbone of the dance of death has its devotional template in the litany of saints prayed to daily in prayer books, including the ‘suffrages’ section of the popular lay form, the Book of Hours.²⁰ The antiphonal format of liturgy may influence the way each verse of the poem spoken by Death is answered by the person upon whom Death calls. Practicing the hours included praying daily through the Office of the Burial of the Dead (which usually followed the suffrages to the saints), whether or not there was a funeral, a ritual that helps us understand the transi tomb and the visual program of Lydgate’s poem as supports to widespread practices of meditation on death.²¹

Lydgate’s poem adds to his French original an exchange between Death and the Princess or Lady of Great Estate, depending on the manuscript, a figure that he might well have identified with his patron, the Duchess of Suffolk, and the Latin word her tomb uses to refer to her. It is placed near the opening of the poem between Death’s encounters with the Baron and the Bishop, indicating

20 Wieck R.S., *Painted Prayers: The Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York: 1997) is particularly good at conveying the conventions of format and illumination in the Book of Hours tradition. For cultural history, see Duffy E., *Marking the Hours: English People and Their Prayers 1240–1570* (New Haven – London: 2006).

21 The late medieval *ars moriendi*—the practice of the art of dying—anchors a tradition that can easily be seen to engage all these artifacts. Here I want to place them in their collaborative context but focus on the distinct qualities and powers of the artifacts themselves, rather than their adherence to the didactic platform of the pastoral and meditative discourse devoted to dying. For the medieval art of death as it collaborated with the institutional practices and forms of political life, see also the excellent Appleford A., *Learning to Die in London, 1380–1540* (Philadelphia: 2014); Oosterwijk S. – Knöll S. (eds.), *Mixed metaphors: The Danse Macabre in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Newcastle upon Tyne: 2011); and Binski P., *Medieval Death*. Christine Kralik’s forthcoming work on the topos of the three living and the three dead identifies another related visual and narrative practice of multiplying bodies.

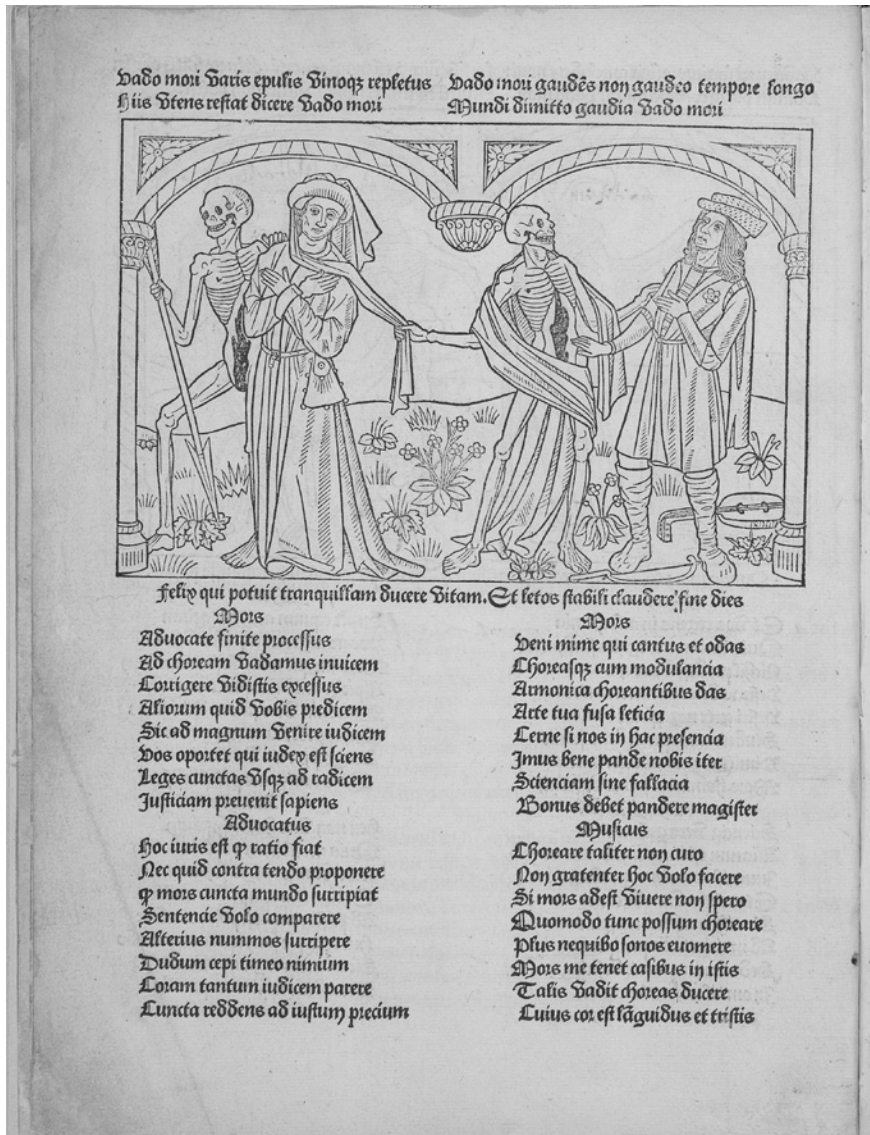


FIGURE 20.9 Guy Marchand, *Chorea ab eximio Macabro* (Paris, 1490). Woodcuts influenced by the lost mural at the cemetery of the Innocents, which depicted the verses translated by Lydgate. Print folio in Latin with woodcuts 26.5 cm. Washington, Library of Congress, Incun. 1490. D26 N7720.M18.

her high standing. It imagines her beauty and ability to master others in love as central to that high standing:

Death speaketh to the Princesse.

Come forth anon, my Lady good Princesse,
Ye must also gon vpon this daunce.
Nought may auayle your great straungenesse,
Nether your beauty nor your gret pleasaunce,
Your riche aray, nother your daliaunce,
That whylom couth so many holde in hond
In loue, for al your double variaunce.
Ye mot as nowe this footyng vnderstonde.

The Princesse maketh aunswere.

Alas, I see there is none other boote,
Deth hath in earth no lady nor maistres,
And on this daunce yet mot I nedes fote:
For there nis quene, countesse ne dutchesse,
Flouring in bountie nor in her fayrenes,
That shode of Death mot passe the passage,
When our beautie and counterfeit fairnes
Dieth, adue then our rimpled age! (ll. 185–200)²²

22 *Death speaks to the Princess*

Come out now, my Lady good princess,
You too must begin this dance.
Your great aloofness will not avail,
Nor your beauty nor your great favor
Your rich attire nor your flirtation.
You who once could control so many
By love, despite your deceptive inconstancy,
You now must learn this dance step.

The Princess answers

Alas, I see there is no other remedy.
Death has on earth no mistress or boss
And I must step into this dance
For there's no queen, countess, or duchess,
Flowering in bounty or in her fairness,
Who, distinguished by Death, may avoid the path
When our beauty and counterfeit fairness
Die, goodbye then our wrinkled age!

The stress on her *footyng*, on the passage or trace, ties her posture to the choreographed and, tellingly, architectural discipline of Death's plans for her body; the last lines show her steeling herself to relinquish her beauty and her flesh. Here, the word *rimpled* means wrinkled, folded, or corrugated, like the flesh of Alice's cadaver figure; the Harley manuscript witnesses an alternative line: 'Our Reueled age saith farwell adiev'. This might make more sense, in that she is saying that her age of revels—her youth—is leaving her; but the base text Bergen uses is, at the expense of grammatical sense, perhaps more strenuous (even her wrinkled age is leaving her). What is true of all the victims of the poem is true of the Great Lady: that Death is really *her* body, though it seems to have a body of its own that is quite separate. If Death has a skeleton, it is the Princess's skeleton. Here, as so often in personification, a sort of autoimmune condition develops, as something that belongs to one entity is alienated and experienced as quite other than it, perhaps even as attacking it out of nowhere. Death requires the Princess to lose control of her own 'straungenesse', that disdainful and compelling quality of romance ladies who play hard to get, and to submit instead to its quite foreign, exterior, superior, and ultimately strange power. Death forces her to follow a passageway or path that leads her away from herself. In the poem, the otherness is always the same: death is the same thing to all of us. In biological fact, our skeletons are no more alike than our faces or social positions, if less legible, but in the dance those bones are unified into a single image that repeats mercilessly across the poem. The terrifying repetition of sameness is designed to shock us again and again as we see the shock every character experiences, each unlikelier than the last, but all inevitable. Reading the poem, we are drawn through postures of disgust and pity, disgust and pity—a repetition at the frequency interval of two stanzas. It is a dance for the reader, designed to draw us in and out of other persons as a way of accepting the simultaneously comic and penitential work of relinquishing ourselves to dissolution.

Quotations are from Henry Bergen's edition, Lydgate, "The Daunce of Machabree" 1030–1031. In Florence Warren's edition of the poem. *The Dance of Death*, Death's stanza is titled "Dethe to the Lady of gret astate" and the last three lines read instead: "That she of dethe mote dethes trace sewe / For to yowre beaute & counterfete fresshnesse / Owre rympled age seithe farewel adiewe" ("That she compelled by death must death's path pursue / for to your beauty and counterfeit freshness / our wrinkled age says farewell, adieu"). Lydgate J., *The Dance of Death*, ed. F. Warren (London: 1931). In the Harley MS, according to Bergen, the last line reads 'Our Reueled age saith farwell adiev'; Lydgate, "The Daunce of Machabree" 1031n. Perhaps Prospero has Lydgate in mind as well as Chaucer.

A recognition that dances in and out of the body is not only a way of learning to relinquish one's flesh and one's very social being, but it is also a way of assimilating oneself into social structures that require an abnegation of self-concern. Lydgate's poem appears to be a leveling sort of look at social hierarchy, but it also places everyone quite firmly into a network of carefully tied together positions. The other characters of the dance are no more individual than is Death; they are social persons who personify positions within the many networks of the polity. Baron and Lady, Bishop, Mayor, Magician—none of these are independent agents who happen to have particular occupations. Rather, they are legally supported sets of social relations—the baron is a place with an octopus of links to other places (king, wife, son, father, parliament, barony, dependents, and so forth), a sort of shaped shell, an effigy (or 'dignite', in the Middle English legal lexicon) designed for a body to fill. These are not so much roles as they are links or gears that mesh with others. 'Effigy' is a late word in the archive concerning tomb sculpture; Nigel Llewellyn reports that early sculptors and their clients more often use 'proportion' and 'picture'.²³ "The Daunce of Machabree" may feel like a radically democratic, socially leveling poem, because it displays the human cipher—the skeleton—which every body that fills these positions has within. But it is perhaps not a democratic display so much as a Christian practice that upholds the hierarchy and, at most, promises some relief from it in death. The catalog of persons in the "Daunce" looks forward to political philosophy like that of Thomas Smith, whose *De Republica Anglorum* (written in 1565; printed in 1583) catalogs the 'persons of the common wealth' as a way of describing the hierarchical social structure of Elizabethan England.²⁴ One is invited to scan the litany and find the slot in which one fits, and one is invited to imagine the other positions and take from them solace or outrage or awe—but in searching through the positions, one is assimilated to accepting the shape of the whole and to acknowledging, for better or worse, as it were, the fatal placement of one's body within it, both during life and in the encounter with death. 'Ye mot as now this footyng understonde' (l. 192), as Death says to the Princess.

The entwined personifications of John Lydgate's text and Alice Chaucer's tomb exemplify the special capacities of the device to engage the human being who encounters such artifacts. Personification scripts a series of bodily

23 Llewellyn N., *Funeral Monuments in Post-Reformation England* (Cambridge: 2000) 222–223.

24 Smith Thomas, *De Republica Anglorum: the Maner of Gouvernement or Policie of the Realme of England* (London, Henrie Midleton for Gregorie Seton: 1583) 18.

postures for the viewer, whether medieval or now living. The postures bring with them strong emotions and attitudes, ritual practices such as worship and penitence, positions in the fabric of social life, and ideological understandings of the features of space itself. The postures that the human body is capable of have not much changed in five hundred years, but their cultural meanings have, of course, shifted profoundly. So the double human figures that we find positioned by the microarchitectural features of poems and tombs continue to function both as witnesses to medieval personhood and as engagements with our own fleshly, responsive, various human natures.

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‘But You are Blind, and Know Not What is in You’: ‘A.L.’, The Fraudulent Judge, and the Coerced Conscience

June Waudby

Upon her return to London in 1560 Anne Locke published a modest volume entitled *Sermons of John Calvin, upon the songe that Ezechias made after he had bene sicke and afflicted by the hand of God, conteyned in the 38. chapter of Esay*.¹ Written during her self-imposed religious exile in Geneva, Locke's small volume is simply presented as the pious and accurate English translation of a set of Calvin's sermons from French.² The organisation of the volume and the genres employed posit interesting points of debate, however. The pragmatic title belies the fact that the translations are flanked on either side by Locke's own imaginative writing in both prose and poetry [Fig. 21.1]. This in itself is remarkable, in that original composition, especially published and sold for general consumption, was considered immodest and therefore inappropriate for women in this era. The first section, the Prefatory Letter addressed to the dowager Duchess of Suffolk, is a prose allegory on spiritual sickness, which may be considered an exercise in *paragoneor*. The titular translations comprise the main body of the text, while the final section is the first known English sonnet sequence, presented as the penitential meditation. Locke's volume and the methodology employed raises interesting questions. The dedication to the celebrated Protestant heroine, Catherine Bertie, dowager Duchess of Suffolk, takes an overtly polemical stance against Catholic prelates, doctrine and practice, identified as causing the 'sick stomacke of minde' which promotes torment, sin and desperation.³ Utilising the familiar trope of the 'Good Physician',

1 Full title: Locke Anne, *Sermons of John Calvin, upon the songe that Ezechias made after he had bene sicke and afflicted by the hand of God, conteyned in the 38. chapter of Esay. Translated out of Frenche into English* (London, John Day: 1560).

2 The four sermons in question were delivered between Friday, November 5 and Tuesday, November 16, 1557, and it is assumed that Locke was present to hear them, having travelled to Geneva within a group of co-religionists which arrived six months prior to this. The text was published in January 1560 after the accession of the Protestant Elizabeth I to the throne.

3 Locke Anne, *Collected Works of Anne Vaughan Lock*, ed. S.M. Felch (Tempe: 1999) 4, 5. Please note, Locke's name is spelled variously as 'Locke', 'Lock' and 'Lok'.

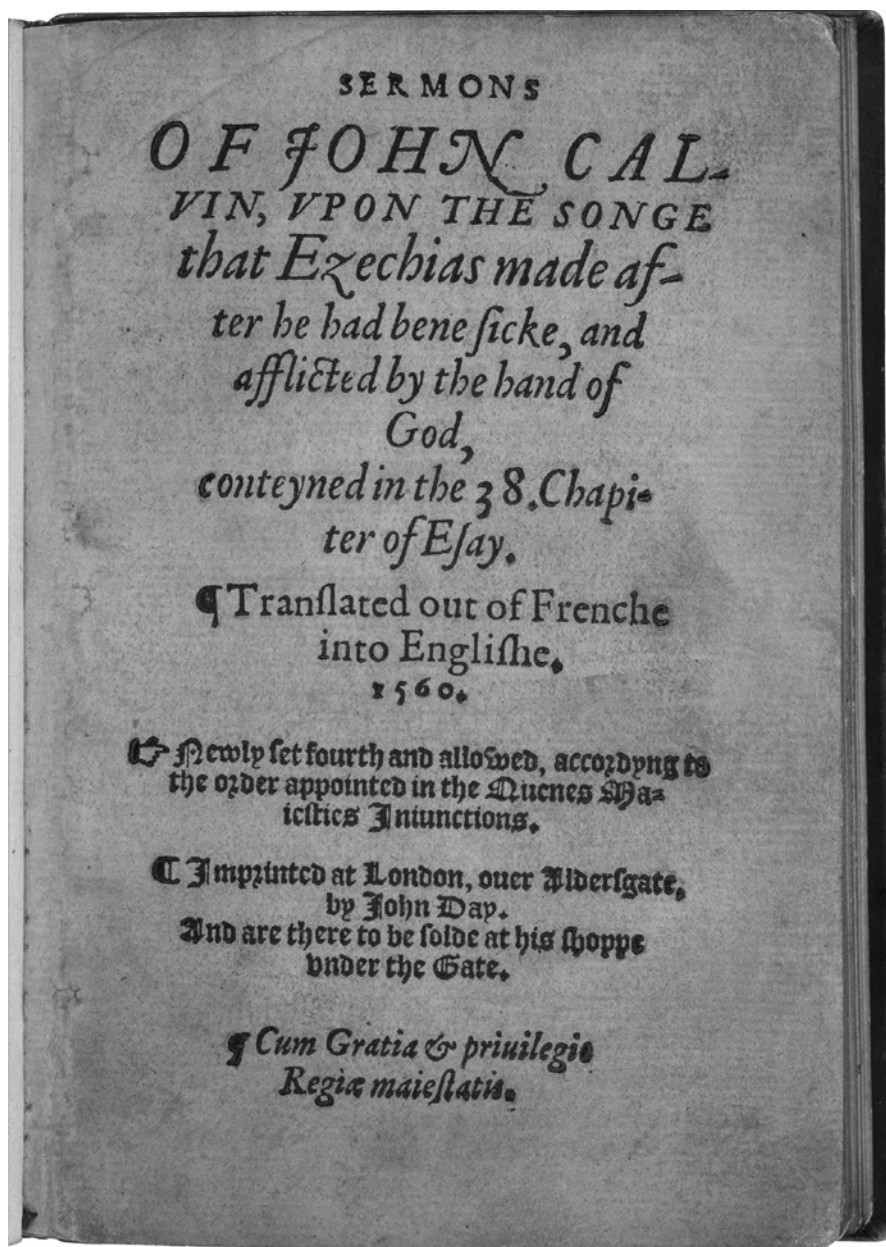


FIGURE 21.1 *Title page of Anne Locke, Sermons of John Calvin, upon the songe that Ezechias made (. . .) (London, John Day: 1560). Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library, STC 4450, n.f.*

IMAGE © FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY.

the theme of spiritual sickness, identified as loss of faith and its accompanying despair, links all three sections of Locke's volume. The set of Calvin's sermons which she translated were exegeses of *Isaiah* 38:9–2, known as King Hezekiah's 'Song'. They recount his mortal illness and despair that God had forsaken him, his delivery from sickness and his fear of death, and end with the question of how he will recognise that he is reconciled with God. This serious issue held special resonance for the faithful of Calvin's theocracy; many suffered from 'religious melancholia' and were beleaguered by the doctrine of double predestination and so particularly vulnerable to crises of faith.⁴

While the Prefatory Letter and the rhetoric of the translations were unchallenging to a Calvinist reader, the final section, the "Meditation of a penitent sinner, vpon the 51. Psalm" demands a different response and poses impenetrable questions. Why Locke chose the new poetic form of the sonnet as her vehicle, associated as it was with the discourse of courtly love, is a conundrum.⁵ A further complication is that this section is divided into a set of five prefatory sonnets, seemingly intended to set the scene, before the "Meditation" proper, which is again presented in a sonnet sequence. This main sequence of 21 sonnets is based upon *Psalm* 51, the *Miserere*, which appears on the outer margins of the page, alongside the sonnets [Fig. 21.2]. Although the Psalmic verses may appear to be original, they are, in fact, a compilation of different reformist authors' translations. Locke's inspiration came from a variety of sources including the versions of William Tyndale, Miles Coverdale and Antony Gilby, all of which, it may be assumed, were readily available to her.⁶

The intended purpose of this unconventional contemplation on personal sin also raises questions. It has been considered an aid to familial or neighbourhood devotions, perhaps intended for the embattled pockets of resistance

4 Perkins William, *A treatise tending unto a declaration whether a man be in the estate of damnation or in the estate of grace. and if he be in the first, how he may in time come out of it.* (London, R. Robinson, for T. Gubbin and I. Porter: 1590); Perkins William, *A golden chaine, or the description of theologie containing the order of the causes of saluation and damnation* (London, Edward Alde: 1591); Dent Arthur, *The plaine-mans path-way to heaven. Wherein every man may clearly see, whether he shall be saved or damned* (London, R. Dexter: 1601).

5 The Petrarchan sonnet form was introduced to the English court, circa 1527, by Sir Thomas Wyatt the Elder, an associate and tenant of Locke's father. His first published sonnets appeared posthumously in Richard Tottell's miscellany, *Songes and Sonettes* in 1557, when Locke was already in Geneva (Anon., *Livre des Anglois*, MS (AEG) E.C. *Communautés diverses* 2, State Archives, Geneva: 1557–1559). No Englishwoman is known to have published sonnets prior to 1560.

6 The latter being used in the new Geneva Bible. The text which has the most correlations is the 1537 'Matthew's Bible' version, which was originally based on Tyndale's Psalm.

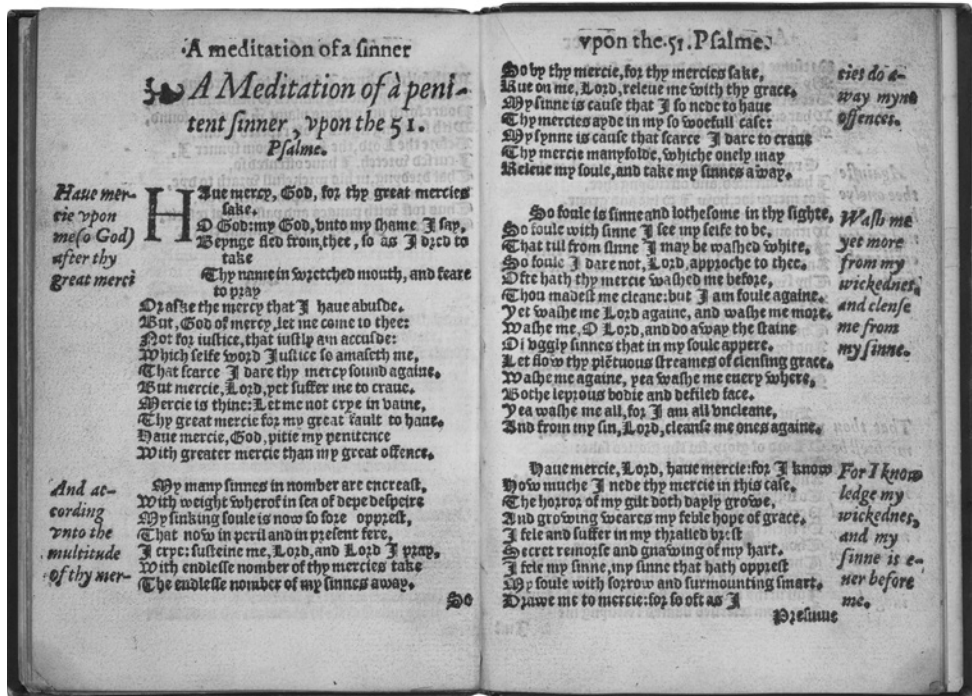


FIGURE 21.2 *Opening of A Meditation of à penitent sinner, vpon the 51. Psalm. Anne Locke, Sermons of John Calvin, upon the songe that Ezechias made (...) (London, John Day: 1560). Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library, STC 4450, n.f.*
 IMAGE © FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY.

in England, but its dialectical thrust demands a harrowing self-reckoning incompatible with group worship.⁷ Citing Plato's delineations in *Gorgias*, Stanley Fish defines the 'satisfying' verification of one's convictions, such as those presented in Locke's other two sections, as rhetorical, while more undermining dialectical discourses demand a re-examination of entrenched belief to facilitate the personal discovery of truth.⁸ In fact, despite the volume's strident Calvinist ethos, the "Meditation" in some ways resembles the exercises of imaginative immersion found in Catholic contemplations of the time.⁹ The "Meditation" is vocalised through the persona of the Penitent Sinner; within

7 Waudby J., "Anne Locke: Exile, Protest and Propaganda", in Séllei N. – Waudby J. (eds.), *She's Leaving Home: Women's Writing in English in a European Context* (New York etc.: 2011) 221.
 8 Fish S.E., *Self-Consuming Artefacts: The Experience of Seventeenth-Century Literature* (Berkeley – Los Angeles: 1972) xv.
 9 See Rickaby J., *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola* (London: 1923) 23, for example.

this scenario Locke explores the disordered mind of the sinner via diegetic animation of common themes from doctrines of damnation and salvation, illustrating facets of Calvinist soteriological doctrine.¹⁰ The literary strategy of personifying the fragmented psyche universalises the experience of the sinner; in creating a separate cast of characters, Locke vivifies the struggle for steadfast belief, compelling readers to confront their own devils within. The reader is consequently guided to a psychological liminal space in which religious terror can achieve its intended impact: a renewal of clear-sighted faith. Identifying with and accompanying Locke's Penitent Sinner, the reader realises humanity's complete depravity and must accept mankind's utter reliance on God's undeserved favour; the point at which the process of salvation can begin. If Locke's process is successful there should be no further need to retrace the fears of reprobation, nor the anxieties of abandonment, so debilitating to the anxious believer. Neither is there, in fact, any need of the life-changing "Meditation" itself, as its work is done; in Fish's terms it may be considered a 'self-consuming artefact'.¹¹

'By What Means Eloquence is Attained'¹²

Although the study of rhetoric was an integral part of boys' education, female display of oratory eloquence was considered an anathema to prevalent concepts of modesty, prompting prominent educators to advise against training young women in the art. Without doubt, some female authors of the era, Locke included, do demonstrate adept handling of rhetorical precepts and literary embellishment, however, positing questions of how and where they received their training. Effective communication was particularly important to Locke's merchant kith and kin. The letters of Locke's father, Stephen Vaughan, a mercer, diplomat and King's Factor, reveal that Locke was educated by a gifted tutor alongside her younger male and female siblings and, c. 1546, they were joined by William Brooke, son of Lord Cobham. The schoolroom curriculum would almost certainly have included analysis and use of rhetorical composition, in preparation for Brooke's public role and her brother's anticipated

10 Although Locke's Penitent Sinner is ungendered, the female pronoun will be used henceforth.

11 Fish, *Self-Consuming Artefacts* 9.

12 Wilson Thomas, *The Arte of Rhetorique, for the use of all suche as are studious of eloquence, sette forth in English*, second edition (London, John Kingston: 1560), ed. G.H. Mair (Oxford: 1909) 4.

career.¹³ Digested readings of classical works of rhetoric, such as Erasmus' *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum* (c. 1512), Richard Sherry's *A Treatise of Schemes and Tropes* (1550, 1555) and Thomas Wilson's *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1553, 1560) were popular study texts in schools and universities but also as self-directed study aids for aspiring diplomats and traders. Bonds of patronage and his 'Lutheran' sympathies linked Wilson with the clandestine coterie of reform advocates at court, including Queen Anne Boleyn, Sir Thomas Wyatt, the Duchess of Suffolk, to whom Locke's volume was dedicated, and the patron of Locke's father, the powerful Thomas Cromwell, chief minister to Henry VIII. Given the close ties of these co-religionists in the capital, it is reasonable to assume that Wilson's text was owned by the Vaughan and Locke households to assist in matters of diplomacy and trade.

Locke's skills of literary analysis and invention may also have been developed through her family's extreme reformist practices. The mercantile community was a ferment of religious dissidence during the reigns of Henry VIII and Mary I. Within this strand of extreme Protestantism emphasis on individual responsibility for one's own salvation encouraged regimes of ruthless self-examination and frequent sermon attendance, in order to hear the 'lively Word of God'.¹⁴ The 'godly', as they termed themselves, habitually took sermon notes for later group discussion and study; this common practice was eventually formally organised for the preservation of Calvin's sermons by the *Compagnie des étrangers* (Company of foreigners), the English exiles' church of Geneva,¹⁵ to which Locke belonged between 1557 and 1559. The corrected transcriptions were available for personal study upon payment of a fee, providing ample opportunity to study the structure and style.¹⁶ Although the continental reformers aimed to simplify their preaching, they were products of a humanist education and, in Calvin's case, the study of Law. It is generally accepted that Protestant emphasis on Bible-reading promoted literacy, but the importance of the routine and detailed transcription and scrutiny of sermons

13 Using Felch's dates: 1534–c.1590. *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1509–1558*, ed. S.T. Bindoff (Yeovil, Somerset: 1982), <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/brooke-william-1527-97#family-relations>.

14 See Carlson E.J., "The Boring of the Ear", in Taylor L. (ed.), *Preachers and People in the Reformation and Early Modern Period* (Leiden etc.: 2001) 249–283.

15 Parker T.H.L., *Calvin's Old Testament Commentaries* (Edinburgh: 1986); Collinson P., *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (London: 1983) 10, 11, citing Brit. Mus., MS. Lansdowne 157, fol. 186; AEA/12, fol. 92v.

16 Golding Arthur, "Preface", in idem, *The Sermons of M. John Calvin upon the fifth booke of Moses called Deuteronomie* (London: Henry Middleton for George Bishop: 1583), Early English Books Online STC (second edition) 4442.

in advancing skills of analysis and composition has been overlooked. During her exile Locke was immersed in this culture of ardent sermon study and all three sections of her text evidence her adept use of rhetorical organisation and embellishment, although this study will focus mainly on the final section, the prefatory and main sonnet sequences which make up her "Meditation".

Locke's Prefatory Letter and Authorial Identity

Locke opens the volume with a dedication to the Catherine, dowager Duchess of Suffolk, a celebrated Protestant patron and herself a Marian exile at the same time as Locke. To her brethren this establishes Locke's *ethos*, confirming her reformist credentials. The opening section is in fact a *laus*, which praises her co-religionists, including the Duchess, before mounting a searing *vituperation* of the Catholic Church, whose teachings, she warns, condemn its flocks to the infernal fire. The postscript to this prefatory division is a disclaimer of personal eloquence:

Concernyng my translation of this boke, it may please you to understand that I have rendred it so nere as I possibly might, to the very words of his texte, and that in so plaine Englishe as I could expresse [...].¹⁷

Claiming transparent fidelity to the source, Locke disavows her own literary input. The already shadowy authorial presence denoted only by the initials, 'A.L.', extracts herself further in this denial of agency. In this section, although she remains steadfast to Calvin's lexicon and overall message, Locke actually makes frequent changes in syntax and punctuation which often result in altered emphasis. A more noticeable intervention is her frequent use of *exergasia*, in her habitual use of doubling and even tripling for emphasis.

In the final section of the address to the Duchess Locke outlines the thematic continuity of the "Meditation", added 'unto the ende' of the book. Giving impact to the statement with a full page disclaimer, she states emphatically that the addition is not of Calvin's composition; she does not claim it as her own, however, but employs a further distancing strategy, declaring that it was given to her by a friend. Some critical opinion has accepted this literally and

¹⁷ Locke, *Collected Works* 8, ll. 202–204. Space does not permit close examination of the sermons in this chapter. The sermons do remain very close to the French sources, however, employing cognates in almost every sentence however, there are numerous minor adjustments of emphasis and frequent enhancement through rhetorical figures of repetition.

searched for likely candidates from within the English exile community. In fact, such simplistic reading practice denies her authorial skill and sophisticated strategies. As elsewhere in the volume, for example, the insertion of blank pages here effectively promotes the impression of different authorial personas guiding the divisions of the text. More recent lexical analysis has convinced modern-day scholarship that Locke is, in fact, the author.¹⁸

Compound Entities and a Taxonomy of Tropes

Within her volume Locke utilises several personifications, some more developed than others. The first is the indistinct and genderless 'A.L.' of the dedication to the Duchess of Suffolk, who would be read as male, by default, by most readers.¹⁹ This persona confirms the authorial commitment to the new faith in a rancorous polemic against Catholic prelates, before advising on spiritual sickness and its cure. In Aristotelian terms this provides Locke's intended readership with 'proof' of her ethical and moral character. In his discussion of classical definitions of *prosopopoeia*, Gavin Alexander highlights the difficulty of distinguishing between the orator's person and the contrived representation of *ethos*. Arguing that the Greek understanding of *prosopon* is 'face' or 'mask', he delineates the metonymic link between this external and assumed role in the representation of inner credibility.²⁰ That Locke was a respected member of the community of English refugees is not in dispute but, as detractors of rhetoric have always been quick to point out, beneath its 'self-adornment' rhetoric has the capacity to deceive 'by forms and colors, polish and dress'.²¹ Anne Locke and 'A.L.', are not the same person; the former is gifted and educated writer in her early twenties, the latter a transitive and fictive persona or 'mask' of one of God's elected and speaks as such, informed by the ideological meta-narrative of Calvinism. As the *prosopon* does not have visual representation, but is only a transcribed voice, character is articulated via the cultural

18 See, for example, Felch S. (ed.), *Collected Works* liii; Hannay M., "'Unlock my Lippes'; the *Miserere mei Deus* of Anne Vaughan Lok and Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke", in Brink J.R. (ed.) *Privileging Gender in Early Modern England* (Kirkville: 1993) 19–36.

19 Although the author's gender is not identified, the feminine pronoun is used for 'A.L.' henceforth.

20 Alexander G., "Prosopopoeia: the speaking figure", in Adamson S. – Alexander G. – Ettenhubert K. (eds.), *Renaissance Figures of Speech* (Cambridge: 2007) 97–112.

21 Plato, *Gorgias*, 465b. [Online] Hosted by Tufts University Available: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0178%3Atext%3DGorg.%3Asection%3D465b>, accessed June 25, 2014.

encoding within the dedication's lexical fields. Followers of the new faith shared a reformed lexicon which undermined orthodox practice and provided a source of communal cohesion.²² Locke's assumed persona's effective utilisation of the lexicology creates the figure of a kindred spirit, and so a trusted guide, and is the first of a set of prosopopoeic figures.

The initial point of reference in this host of characters is, of course, Anne Locke, who links with 'A.L.' in the shared initials and Calvinist credentials; the Penitent Sinner of the "Meditation" seems to have no connection with either of these, however, but is locked in an abusive relationship with the personified Despair (*Despeir*). Locke's pious readers would recognise this allegorical figure as the mask of Satan, as to despair of one's salvation was considered a sin encouraged by the devil. This personification then strikes up a working relationship with the Penitent Sinner's own Conscience, in a strange inversion of the usual Manichaeistic relationship between Good and Evil. Co-opted by Despair, Conscience and Sin (*Sinne*) then attack the sinner's heart, one cruelly ripping it and the other taking control of it in this debilitated state. A struggling Faith appears briefly and, despite oppression and initial loss of agency, ultimately manages to repel the final attack of Despair aided by the Sinner's heartfelt plea for divine mercy. The fragmentation and ill-defined dramatic presences create a *mimesis* of the 'passioned minde' of the over-wrought Penitent Sinner. There are obvious resonances with the characters of the medieval morality drama to be found in Locke's work but Gavin Alexander also identifies such 'shades of personation' in many later Elizabethan literary works, identifying them as 'the basis of making fictions'.²³ Given the early modern interdiction against women's imaginative writing, and its early date, this is a significant point.

The obscure presence of 'A.L.' absents herself further by completely denying authorship of the final section of her volume, claiming, 'it was delivered me by my frend with whom I knew I might be so bolde to use and publishe it as it pleased me'.²⁴ On what level this disclaimer is to be read is open to debate. On a phenomenological level, within the context of Locke's lived experience, she may choose to distance herself from the sonnet form used to structure the "Meditation" due to its association with the profane, rather than the devotional

22 See William Tyndale's determined dismantling of orthodox ecclesiastical terminology in the epistles and glossaries attached to his biblical translations.

23 Alexander, "Prosopopoeia" 108. He particularly draws attention to the very frequent use of personification in the sonnets of Shakespeare and Sidney. See also Ackroyd P., *Shakespeare: The Biography* (London: 2006) 111.

24 Locke Anne, "A Meditation of a Penitent Sinner", in idem, *Collected Works of Anne Vaughan Lock* 62–71, here 62, ll. 9–10.

lyric.²⁵ Given that it was intended as an aid to intense personal introspection, leading to complete abjection and surrender to God's will, there may be a further vindication for her absence, however. Within the prescribed doctrine of penitence, the object was to achieve a state of utter dejection, as the threshold of the ascendant path back to God's favour. The process of severe purging was intended to anchor the sinner's awareness of the condition of complete alienation from a state of grace and absolute reliance on God's benevolence. The sinner must be brought to realise that ultimately there was neither help nor guidance, except from God alone. This is the point in the volume where the trusted guide, 'A.L', disappears, leaving the "Meditation" to achieve its object.

This third section of the volume opens with a prefatory 'composition of place',²⁶ intended to enable the reader to mentally prepare for the extended "Meditation" and 'with the eye of the imagination' facilitate deep empathic identification with the subject matter of the devotional lyric to follow. The title clearly indicates that its five introductory sonnets are written from the perspective of the disordered mind of the Penitent Sinner and plunges the reader into a *media res* lamentation:

The hainous gylt of my forsaken ghost
 So threates, alas, unto my febled sprite
 Deserved death, and (that me greveth most)
 Still stand so fixt before my daseld sight
 The lothesome filthe of my disteined life,
 The mighty wrath of myne offended Lorde,
 My Lorde whos wrath is sharper than the knife,
 And deper woundes than dobleedged sworde,
 That, as the dimmed and fordullen eyen
 Full fraught with teares and more and more opprest
 With growing streames of the distilled bryne
 Sent from the furnace of a grefefull brest,
 Can not enjoy the comfort of the light,
 Nor finde the waye wherin to walk aright [...]²⁷

25 Though, of course, this must raise questions of why it was chosen.

26 As Rickaby clarifies, the 'composition of place' is intended to spiritually prepare the participant prior to the meditation. Rickaby, *Spiritual Exercises* 23.

27 Locke, "Meditation" 62, ll. 14–27.

The compelling paradigm of despondency has persuaded critical opinion to interpret the speaking voice as that of Anne Locke, in a thinly-disguised confession of her own temporal transgressions and spiritual anxiety, rather than from the wider phenomenological or a literary perspective.²⁸ A more convincing reading links it to the 'works of comfort' written by religious divines and autobiographies of religious conversion. John Stachniewski's valuable work, *The Persecutory Imagination*, verifies the pervasive spiritual malaise suffered by many of Locke's co-religionists, pointing out that Calvin's works frequently explore 'the terror that the reprobate, given that they suspect that they are reprobate, must feel.'²⁹ Whether Locke's intended readership was the embattled refugees crowded within the walls of Geneva or her co-religionists at home, desperate to avoid apostasy but threatened with the pyre of martyrdom if they remained loyal, issues of faith were paramount in their thoughts and imaginations. In Stachniewski's characterization these were 'individuals whose minds have been captured by questions of whether or not they were members of the elect and how the life of an elect [...] should be ordered'.³⁰ The possibility of erroneously believing oneself to have been elected to heaven was a debilitating fear to many, not alleviated by ministers who warned that the reprobate may receive some measure of initial grace but lose their 'temporary faith'. Calvin wrote that they 'presumptuously arrogate to themselves what they have not, deceiving others and sometimes even themselves, with empty show'.³¹ Within the relentless counter-logic of Calvinist teachings, however, to search for signs of election amounted to lack of faith which, in turn, denoted disbelief in the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice. Locke's work skilfully depicts these anxieties, endemic within the Calvinist communities, and her adept literary composition is a portrait of the tormented mind, suspended in the stasis of terror.

28 Ottenhoff J., "Mediating Anne Locke's Meditation Sonnets" in Ostovich H. *et al.* (eds.), *Other Voices, Other Views* (London – Newark: 1999) 290–305.

29 In Calvinist doctrine the term 'reprobate' means 'one abandoned by God' and therefore destined for Hell. See Stachniewski J., *The Persecutory Imagination: English Puritanism and the Literature of Religious Despair* (Oxford: 1991) 25, 27.

30 Stachniewski, *The Persecutory Imagination* 11.

31 Calvin John, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. H. Beveridge (Grand Rapids: 1993 [1845]) Book 3:2, 11–12, 478.

Of course one may question Locke's own presumption in assuming her own elite status and the authority to guide others.

'You Know Not What Is in You'

The Penitent Sinner, whose 'passioned minde' is revealed in the Preface of the "Meditation", is a mask which Locke assumes to articulate the torment of an individual suffering from spiritual despair.³² Verbalised in first person, an animated stream of consciousness graphically depicts total interpolation into reformed teachings of human depravity. Vivid imagery and heteroclite phraseology accumulates rapidly through the first two sonnets, creating a disturbing and exhausting narrative of the speaker's psychological condition; mired in 'hainous gylt' and 'lothesome filthe', she grovels in the 'myre' of her sins, suffering the deep wounds of God's wrath, which prompt scalding tears of penitence.³³ In normal circumstances the violence of the imagery might be considered indecorous from a young female writer, but in rhetorical terms it is apt, expressing 'emotion and character in proportion to the subject matter' as a metonymic strategy to demonstrate sincerity.³⁴

The first sonnets in this prefatory section proleptically set up the correlated themes of despair and loss of the 'light' of faith, which are further developed in the main sequence which follows. These are directly related to Calvinist teachings on Original Sin and selective salvation. The intelligent and reasonable persona of the Penitent Sinner is fully cognisant of the theological doctrines and is therefore primed for Despair's obdurate attack on the conscience, which cannot reject his claims.³⁵ This initial section dwells upon her unseeing eyes, blinded by the hot brine of copious weeping, creating a metaphoric link to the ideational topic of the lost path of sanctity:

[...] the dimmed and fordulled eyen,
Full fraught with teares and more and more opprest,
With growing streames of distilled bryne
Sent from the furnace of a grefefull brest,
Can not enjoy the comfort of the light,
Nor finde the waye wherein to walk aright³⁶

32 Locke, "Meditation" 62, ll. 11–13.

33 Ibid. ll. 11–21.

34 Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, trans. W.R. Roberts (New York: 1954), Book 3:7 [Online] Hosted by Massachusetts Institute of Technology, <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/rhetoric.3.iii.html>, accessed February 10, 2014.

35 In a paradoxical inversion, so typical of Calvinism, the realisation of the inevitability of damnation and submission to divine justice signifies one chosen for redemption.

36 Locke, "Meditation" 62, ll. 22–27.

The sequence's spiritual harrowing is a necessary step in preparing the heart for God's judgement; its aim being to stir the mind with passionate remembrance and enumeration of one's sins and therefore deserved condemnation. This type of extreme regime created a state of heightened anxiety and exhaustion with simultaneous diminishment of physical powers. Rudolph Bernet emphasises the changed perceptions and experiences presented within the suspended life of such 'phenomenological epoché', suggesting that the boundaries between things normally understood as invisible and visible break down:

The visible and the invisible are so interwoven that it makes perfect sense to speak, with Husserl, of an 'improper appearing' ('uneigentliche Erscheinung') of the invisible.³⁷

Discussing medieval allegory, James Paxson traces a similar effect caused by the enervated state of 'dorveille', noting 'as the narrator's mind dissolves into stasis, the "mind" of the personification is generated and this new mind can produce the signature of sentience: speech'.³⁸ Just such an 'improper appearing' occurs as the mind of the Penitent Sinner generates further, more abstract, personifications characterised mainly by their speech.

The authorial persona 'A.L.' relates to living people, the Duchess of Suffolk and John Calvin, and creates a sense of community evoked through allusion to the sharing of remedies, medicinal diets and medicine.³⁹ In short, this persona is made easily identifiable as being of the readers' world. The character becomes progressively more indistinct, however, as 'A.L.' disclaims her input in the sermons section and absents herself from the "Meditation", passing responsibility to the invented *friend*. Within the "Meditation" offered by this indefinite figure, the Penitent Sinner again occupies a recognisable, if distorted, world, but it is the spiritual or ideational realm of Calvinist doctrine. She is capable of reflection on her life, is not alone in her world, referring to 'other[s]', and has aspiration toward God's favour. She is, however, manifested mainly in synecdochic fragmented oral and ocular references, or rather, in the

37 Bernet R., "Phenomenological and aesthetic epoché" in Zahavi D. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Phenomenology* (Oxford: 2012) 2, 8, <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199594900.001.0001/oxfordhb/9780199594900-e28>, accessed: February 10, 2014.

38 Paxson J.J., *The Poetics of Personification*, Literature, Culture, Theory 6 (Cambridge: 1994) 96, citing Zink M., "The egorical Poem as Internal Memoir", in Brownlee K. – Nichols S.G. (eds.), *Yale French Studies* 70 (1986) 100–126.

39 Locke, "Meditation" 4–5.

absence of the related faculties: the sight is 'daseld', 'dimmed and fordullen'; the voice can only 'bewayle', shriek, 'straine' and 'crye'.⁴⁰ The disjointed self-representation of this figure further diminishes itself in the representation of *lack* of human senses, amounting to a simultaneous deconstruction as the character is [not] created. The ontological conundrum can be considered a mimetic revelation of spiritual chaos and 'unbecoming'.

At the point of the Penitent Sinner's literally 'giving up the ghost', with her last 'fainting breath' and a broken voice, she calls repeatedly for mercy and the grant of grace.⁴¹ In Calvinist terms the broken spirit and recognition of complete reliance on God's intercession is a mark of her status of election. With cruel irony, however, her shrieking cries conjure the first of Locke's psychological personifications; the demon Despair. The most dangerous enemy to the tormented soul he proceeds to display even her most hidden sins. Erupting suddenly from the second quatrain, his stinging apostrophe attempts to undermine her faith:

In vaine thou brayest forth thy bootlesse noyse
 To him for mercy, O thou refused wight,
 That heares not the forsaken sinners voice.
 Thy reprobate and foreordained sprite,
 For damned vessel of his heaue wrath,
 [...] Of his swete promises can claime no part [...]⁴²

Representing the Old Testament Mosaic Law, Despair sits in judgement over the Sinner's soul, demonstrating the futility of craving help in his claim 'caytif, deserved curse doeth draw / To hell, by justice, for offended law'.⁴³ This 'evidence' and the questions it raises are central to the prefatory sonnets, but also to the function of the entire sequence. The sonnet encapsulates the most distressing circumstances that the wavering Calvinist could envision; the prospect of being numbered among the reprobate. This unbearable possibility lurked beneath the devout introspections of many Calvinists and was a frequent point of discussion in spiritual works addressed to the 'godly'. Typical of this type of guide, Arthur Dent demoralisingly warns:

⁴⁰ Ibid. 63, ll. 17; 22, ll. 36, 40, 41, 42.

⁴¹ Ibid. 63, ll. 40–41.

⁴² Ibid. 63, ll. 46–48.

⁴³ The 'Law' is that given by God to Moses. Locke, "Meditation" 63, l. 54.

But you are blind, and know not what is in you; but dimly imagine you shall be saved, and hope you know what of eternal life. And because this blindness maketh you bold, you will seem to be resolute in words [...] in truth, you are deluded with a false light.⁴⁴

Religious despair was a sin and considered to be the work of the Devil. Thomas Taylor's *Practice of Repentance*, for instance, specifically identifies three forms of despair utilised by Satan: despair of God's mercy, of the efficacy of the contrition and of the sinner's hopeless condition.⁴⁵ The Penitent Sinner's destabilising fear arises from comparison of her own seemingly abandoned case with those of others saved. This brief encounter may be interpreted as fragment of the forensic exercise of *controversia*, in which students were set the task of arguing a subject position from the perspective of the prosecutor or plaintiff, using vivid description and powerful examples to move the audience to empathy and agreement. Again, this seems to present evidence of Locke's familiarity with forensic rhetorical practice, as the exercise, along with *suasoria* was part of the students' advanced programme of study.

Guilefully utilising the rhetoric of damnation to exploit the Sinner's weakness, Despair, in effect, assumes the role of Lawyer for the Prosecution and Judge on God's behalf. His fraudulent manipulation of the doctrine of damnation is wholly in line with historic concerns around the disingenuous nature of the art of rhetoric.⁴⁶ Bolstering his 'evidence' with the crushing terminology of Calvinist eschatological terminology, he addresses the Sinner as *refused wight, forsaken sinner, reprobate, foreordained sprite* and finally *damned vessel*.⁴⁷ The trope of prosecution for involuntary sin is a key theme underwriting the entire Reformation. Luther's struggles with the impossible demands of Mosaic Law, as interpreted by orthodox Catholic faith, are well documented. Central

44 Dent, *The Plaine Man's Path-way to Heaven* 24. John Stachniewski discusses this problem and the Puritan divines' responses in Stachniewski, *The Persecutory Imagination* 17–84.

45 Taylor Thomas, *The practice of repentance laid downe in sundry directions* (London: H. Lownes for I. Bartlet: 1628) 346, 347. See also Perkins William, *Armillæ aurea or A golden chain, or the description of theologie containing the order of the causes of salvation and damnation*, trans. R. Hall (London: Edward Alde: 1591) fol. R2v; and idem, *A treatise tending unto a declaration whether a man be in his estate of damnation or in the estate of grace* (London: R. Robinson for T. Gubbin and J. Porter: 1590?) 263–286 ("Consolations for troubled consciences").

46 See, for example, Aristophanes' Unjust Speech, 'I first contrived how to speak against both law and justice; and this art is worth more than ten thousand staters, that one should choose the worse cause, and nevertheless be victorious' (*Clouds* 1036).

47 Locke, "Meditation" 63, ll. 47–50.

to his conversion, and subsequent Reformed theology, was the belief that salvation did not depend wholly upon the doctrine of atonement for Original Sin but was dependent only upon the gift of grace, rather than the rituals of the church or the deeds of humankind. Hence, the demands of the Law, presented as binding by the fraudulent Judge, are spurious.

Despair's presence is characterised only by a sadistic accusatory voice. Although vigorous, the character does not have a background or any other referent; his sole purpose is to pronounce doom. He is one-dimensional, something akin to medieval representations of sins in religious allegory. Although personified, he is far less developed than the Penitent Sinner characterisation. Paxson's useful taxonomy of tropes delineates possible relationships and overlaps between greater and lesser degrees of abstraction in personification figures.⁴⁸ According to his categorisation, as 'the figural translation of a non-corporeal quantity into a physical corporeal one' Locke's Despair is a *hypostatisation*. Within the mind frame of the intended readership, however, he is the metonymic representation of temptation: Satan. In this case the character is a *protopopoeia*, 'a non-human quality [...] capable of thought and language', although the complex doubling represents a further degree of abstraction.⁴⁹ The disordered mind of the sinner, already several degrees of reality away from Anne Locke, generates a masked character which represents the Anti-Christ. This creation, interrupting his own accusation against the sinner, introduces further personified figures with sentience and speech capabilities, the cognisant Heart and the culpable Conscience:

[...] For damned vessell of his heavie wrath,
 (As selfe witness of the beknowyng hart,
 And secrete guilt of thine owne conscience saith)
 Of his swete promises can claime no parte [...]⁵⁰

The unusual mid-stanza use of parentheses disrupts reader expectations, creating a topological space; a small platform upon which to display Hart and Conscience, both personifications introduced to corroborate the evidence of Despair.⁵¹ An incipient alliance is initiated, later continued in the "Meditation" proper, undermining the normative role of the conscience, as preserving

48 Paxson, *Poetics of Personification* 42, based upon Quintilianus's *Institutio Oratoria*.

49 Paxson, *Poetics of Personification* 42.

50 Locke, "Meditation" 63, ll. 50–53.

51 See Paxson's discussion of Genette's 'narratorial shorthand'; Paxson, *Poetics of Personification* 185, n. 4.

light of divine inspiration. When apparent evidence of her reprobate status overwhelms the sinner persona, this parenthetical stage reopens to reveal Conscience, like a medieval morality character, wishing to assist but too weak and forced into complicity with Despair:

As in the throte of hell, I quake for feare,
And then in present peril to be lost
(Although by conscience wanteth to replye,
But with remorse enforcing myne offence,
Doth argue vaine my not availing crye) [...].⁵²

The concluding sonnets of the prefatory sequence are predicated upon the Penitent Sinner's abjection: in despair of God's mercy, in despair of the efficacy of her contrition and in despair due to her helpless condition.⁵³ All of Satan's stratagems, as identified in Taylor's *Practice of repentance*, are revealed.

The sonnets of the Preface introduce in compacted form the themes continued in the longer sequence in a type of lyrical *prepositio*. The central difference between this and the main sequence is that the sonnets of the latter are based on the *Miserere*, *Psalm* 51, keyed into its verses in the right margins of the pages, most taking one verse as a base from which to extract and develop its theme.⁵⁴ The established personified characters of the Sinner, the Spirit (*Sprite*), the Conscience and Despair are carried forward to the main sequence and the Penitent Sinner's act of contrition in the "Meditation". Although it is linear, and its progress aided by the framework of the annexed Psalmic verses, the personified appearances texture the first-person narrative, puncturing the performance of penitence with the type of digressions so admired by early-modern readers.⁵⁵ A multiple consciousness is inscribed on the narrative by the chain of dialogic interventions, similar to the mimicking of orality termed *skaz* by the Russian Formalists. The sequence is peopled with shades from the sinner's disordered mind and their interventions are its ventriloquisms. Locke's strategic position is complex; indicating that the sinner is unbalanced by presages

⁵² Locke, "Meditation" 63, ll. 64–66.

⁵³ As previously, see Taylor, *Practice of repentance* 346–347. The final sonnet does end with her craving mercy with penitent 'chere', however, an indication that she is one of the 'elect' and will be saved.

⁵⁴ The "Meditation" also links back to the translated sermons and Calvin's Commentary on Isaiah 38.

⁵⁵ As in Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, and Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, for example.

of abandonment, she nonetheless presents the “Meditation” as a penitential guide which encourages the readers’ affective participation. This seems to indicate a dislocation of purpose; why would Locke encourage the identification given that the *prosopopoeia* displays symptoms of religious mania? It must be assumed that this is an element of the narrative intrigue; in Valerij Tjupa’s terms, it ‘addresses the reader’s receptive intentions’.⁵⁶

This final section of the volume is voiced by the Penitent Sinner personification and the *ethos* and contexts, already established in the Preface, are confirmed in a semantic field rooted in reformed theology. The *enargia* is colloquial and vivid—including slaughterhouse imagery—to incite passionate revulsion of a sinful life and so facilitate perfect contrition.⁵⁷ Gavin Alexander identifies a heuristic function in this type of encounter, which assists readers to articulate their own innermost perceptions.⁵⁸ This is surely Locke’s intention and draws upon the principle of *catharsis*, as enacted by the masked characters of Greek Tragedy. The “Meditation” sustains the sense of loss of veridical reality, as the prime *prosopopoeia* suffers diminishment of her human senses, her body comes alive with senecdochic vigour; the heart gnaws, pines, yields, is broken and humbled and the weakened and bruised skeleton leaps.⁵⁹ The Sinner’s personified Spirit and Soul experience oppression and sorrow, sink and smart, rue and wail, and listen for the voice of mercy. Sin, at first presented through botanical imagery, blooming and fruiting, so entwines itself with the Sinner that she feels its juice within her veins.⁶⁰ Whether organic Sin is anthropomorphised in this encounter or the Sinner is dehumanised, in an Ovidian

56 Tjupa V. “Narrative Strategies”, in Hühn P. *et al.* (eds.) *The living handbook of narratology*. Hamburg: 2014). [Online] Available: <http://www.lhn.uni-hamburg.de/article/narrative-strategies>. Accessed 10/02/2014.

57 This emphatic display of eloquence is precisely that which was so strongly censured in women, see Vives J.L., *De institutione feminae Christianae* (1523), Book One 11:106, in Fantazzi C. (ed. and trans.) *The Education of a Christian Woman: A Sixteenth Century Manual* (London – Chicago, 2000) 134.

This may, in fact, be one reason why Locke formally repudiates authorship of the section.

58 Alexander, “Prosopopoeia” 110.

59 Locke, “Meditation” 65–71, ll. 225, 134, 312, 352, 224.

60 Ibid. 64–67, ll. 103, 136, 148, 217, 173–178. In Paxson’s taxonomy the latter example might be identified as a type of *pragmapeia*: ‘the translation of a human agent into an inanimate thing’ (43), except that the ‘human’ herself is a *prosopopoeia*, thus further demonstrating the complex layering within the work and the difficulty of creating structural divisions between representations of the figure.

transformation, is not clear. These fragments of the Penitent Sinner's persona are not fully developed into true *prosopopoeia* but create a sense of her spiritual turmoil.

The overarching semantic field of the "Meditation" is that of judicial proceedings enmeshed with ecclesiastical doctrine, with copious references to guilt, mercy, atonement and punishment. At the end of the prefatory section the trauma of perceiving the awaiting 'throat of hell' provokes the Sinner to appeal directly to God for mercy and she continues to address him throughout the main sequence. A sub-theme of corporal punishment and dismemberment is also introduced in the preface to reappear amplified in the main section. In the prefatory sequence God's wrath is described as 'sharper than the knife', capable of inflicting 'deper woundes than a dobleedged sword' and the imagery of physical destruction develops as Despair spreads out her most hidden sins, like meat on a slab:

Even then despair before my ruthfull eye
 Spredes forth my sinne and shame, and semes to say:
 In vaine thou brayest forth thy bootlesse noyse [...]⁶¹

Linked by further penetrative imagery, in God's 'allpearning' vision, the visceral theme is extended in the main "Meditation". Conscience, having deserted its supportive role, turns tormentor in place of Despair; cleaving the living heart of the Sinner with premeditated cruelty to display her most covert transgressions. The mimetic correspondence between the attacks is underlined by the repetition of the same phrase [Fig. 21.3]. The scenario is intensified within the "Meditation" proper, in the employment of an abundance of graphic adjectives to depict the tortured soul, dissected by the coerced Conscience:

Beholde againe, how now my sprite it rues,
 And wailes the tyme, when I with foule delight
 Thy swete forbearing mercy did abuse.
 My cruell conscience with sharpned knife
 Doth splat my ripped hert, and layes abroad
 The lothesome secretes of my filthy life,
 And spredes them forth before the face of God.⁶²

61 Ibid. 63, ll. 44–46.

62 Ibid. 65–66, ll. 148–154.

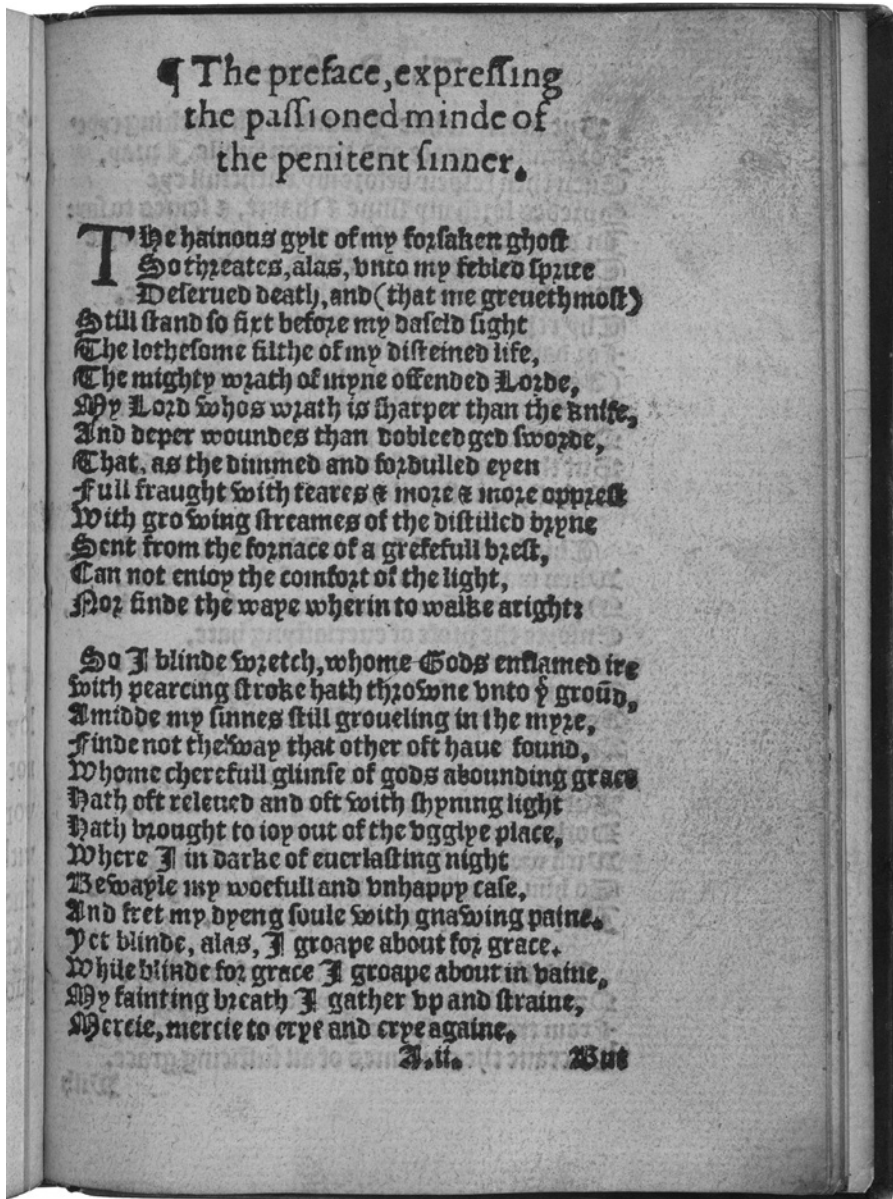


FIGURE 21.3 Page opening of "Preface, expressing the passioned minde of a penitent sinner".
Anne Locke, *Sermons of John Calvin, upon the songe that Ezechias made (...)*
(London, John Day: 1560). Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library, STC 4450, n.f.
IMAGE © FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY.

The violence of the imagery is arresting in its own terms but is especially remarkable in the work of a young woman writing at this time. Although not the first recorded usage, 'splat' is an uncommon lexical choice, as previous examples are rare and refer only to the culinary preparation of fish or animals.⁶³ Some six sonnets later Sin and Despair personified have joined forces to possess and harden the Sinner's heart, to prevent the captive spirit experiencing God's mercy:

Sinne and despair have so possest my hart,
And hold my captive soule in such restraint,
As of thy mercies I can fele no part,
But still in languor do I lye and faint.⁶⁴

The lexis carries the weight of Calvinist soteriological doctrine; the 'hardened heart' is the sign of the Reprobate who rejects God's grace and who is therefore destined for 'the gaping throte of depe, devouring hell'.⁶⁵ The combative imagery of onslaught and battle is, again, reminiscent of the Manichaeism of medieval drama. However, the customary supportive role of conscience as the 'Good Angel' against the attack of the Devil's agent is completely destabilised, emphasising the solitariness of the Sinner pitched against Despair, Sinne and the perceived hatred of God. Despair's final assault is on the dissected and pinning heart, which is pinched, causing 'straining crampe'.⁶⁶ From this nadir of abjection the Sinner can only plead to God for grace—and so is troubled by the antagonism of the assailing personifications no further.

Conclusion

Locke's volume is a curiosity in many respects. She is the only female Marian exile to have actively participated in the project to translate Calvin's works

63 There is only one other recorded sixteenth-century reference, in Wynken de Worde's *Book of Babees*, 1509. "[S]plat, v.1". *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. (Oxford University Press: 2013). Accessed February 10, 2014. The terminology may permit a glimpse of the illusive author, in reflecting her own experience as a young merchant's wife familiar with the market stalls of her native Cheapside, London.

64 The imagery is reminiscent of John Donne's in Holy Sonnet 14, written approximately five decades later.

65 Locke, "Meditation" 69, l. 284. There is close resemblance here to John Donne's later 'I, like an usurp'd town to another due' of Holy Sonnet 14, l. 5, c. 1607.

66 Locke, "Meditation" 70, ll. 311–312.

into English during the inspirational hiatus which also saw the production of the Geneva Bible. Publishing her own original compositions within the volume of sermon translations was itself remarkable at this time, but to use the new form of the English sonnet for the introspection of the “Meditation” was groundbreaking.⁶⁷ The prefatory sonnets and the main sequence draw inspiration from the Psalm paraphrases of revered co-religionists, some known through family connections, others were migrants and neighbours working on translations within Geneva. Given her station in life, the literary and rhetorical aptitude exhibited in the volume is extraordinary; in particular, her experiments with *prosopopoeia* are witness to her lively creativity. The volume does raise some interesting questions, however, as indicated earlier in the chapter.

The material presentation of the volume was in duodecimo format and printed by John Day, himself a famous promoter of the reformed faith. Variations in the typeface encourage the fiction that the text is a compilation of different authors’ works and, as noted, this is further suggested by the insertion of the blank pages between sections [Fig. 21.4].⁶⁸ Merely acknowledging the translations, her volume offers no contents page to assist navigation or epilogue of ‘comfort’ for the reader who has accompanied Locke’s Sinner’s harrowing. This fragmented presentation is demanding in that it requires different reader-responses and seems to deliberately mislead, not only regarding the authorship but also by encouraging immersion in the madness of proscribed despair. The theme of fragmentation apparent in the organisation and binding of the volume is continued and amplified in the fractured presentation of the mind of the final speaker. According to the literary theory of the day, in these rhetorical strategies of division and the decorum of its mimetical function, the volume has ‘poetical proportion’; it provides a mental, if not visual, representation of the subject matter it represents.⁶⁹ Although there is no celebratory closure, which is God’s prerogative and so cannot be written, the final sonnets find the Sinner inspired to hope for salvation, for herself and her brethren, having thrown herself on God’s mercy.

67 Familial connections with the poet Sir Thomas Wyatt the Elder most probably led to her interest in the sonnet form.

68 As Felch notes, the print face of the dedication to the Duchess of Suffolk is 80-point italic, the translations of the sermons appear in a heavy ‘black letter’ 62-point textura type, and the *Mediation* is presented in the 62-point textura with italic shoulder notes. Locke, *Collected Works* lxix. It also has a separate register and pagination. See Early English Books Online STC (second edition) / 4450, British Library Shelf mark: 696.a.40.

69 Puttenham George, *The Arte of English Poesie* (London, Richard Field: 1589) 82.

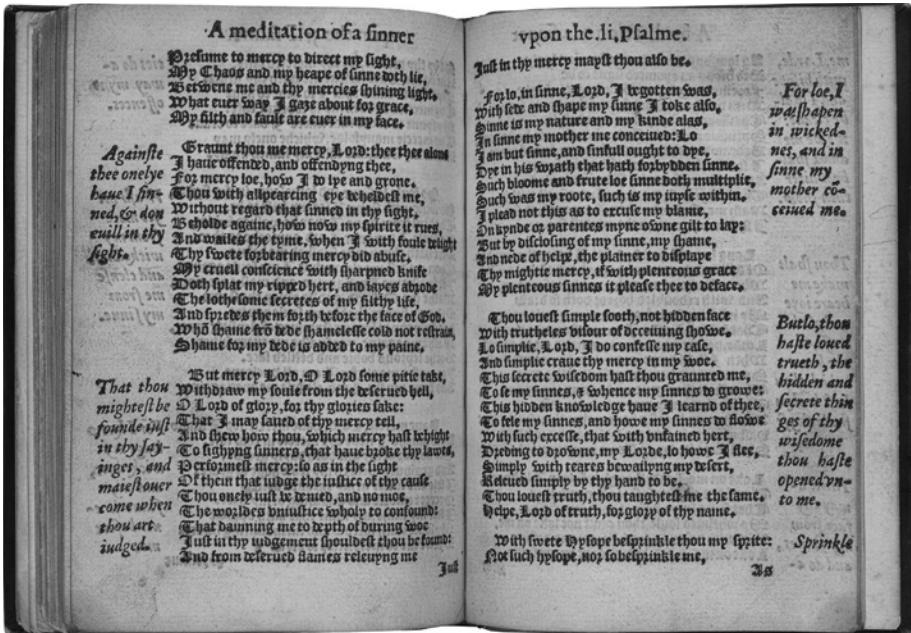


FIGURE 21.4 Page opening with incipit 'Presume to mercy to direct my sight'. Anne Locke, Sermons of John Calvin, upon the songe that Ezechias made (...) (London, John Day: 1560). Washington, Folger Shakespeare Library, STC 4450, n.f.

IMAGE © FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY.

In the Dedictory Letter the initial personified guide, 'A.L.', encourages self-congratulation, including the reader among the favoured 'godly', who are protected by their faith and impervious to temporal misfortunes and sickness of spirit. In the sermons King Hezekiah suffers torments of despair and fear of imminent death, before being spared and welcomed back to God's favour. Thus far the volume illustrates 'safe' themes and beliefs accepted and familiar to Locke's readership. The "Meditation", peopled by the *protopopoeia* of the Penitential Sinner's troubled mind, however, undertakes a completely different and dialectical function. The powerful performance of *movere*, facilitated by Locke's masks, undermines the complacency of the earlier sections.

The psychological personification of aspects of the Christian mindset (the soul, conscience, sin, despair), moreover, creates an ecumenically potent cast separate from Locke and her narrators, and not limited to the constraints of their narrative. The dynamic interaction of familiar personae commands a reader's vicarious involvement in the sinner's struggle for resolute belief but also, crucially, threatens the foundation of self-belief, revealing the alarming

possibility that the reader may be one of the self-deluded and hell-bound reprobate. From the stage of the Sinner's disturbed mind, Locke administers a spiritual purge, forcing the reader to accompany the personified Everyman / Sinner to the 'throate of depe, devouring hell' in order to provoke a life-changing re-assessment.⁷⁰ The spiritual path described, through danger and torment, was familiar to Locke's readers as the progress of the individual towards self-negation and so reconciliation with God. The lessons taught are not only that self-reliance cannot help mankind's fallen state but, by extension, nor can reliance on any practice or method of mankind's devising, including the text itself. In Fish's terms, 'by conveying those who experience it to a point where they are beyond that discursive or rational forms can offer, it becomes the vehicle of its own abandonment'.⁷¹

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⁷⁰ Locke, "Meditation" 69, l. 284.

⁷¹ Fish, *Self-Consuming Artifacts* 3.

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PART 8

*Personification and the Assertion of
Allegorical Order*



Precarious Personification: Fortuna in the Artist's Cabinet

Lisa Rosenthal

In the early decades of the seventeenth century the city of Antwerp, recovering from the recent devastation of the on-going Eighty Years War, began to reclaim its former prominence as a center of artistic production and international trade. The resurgence of the arts was spurred by a confluence of conditions promoting their elevated religious, economic, and cultural value. After the Fall of Antwerp in 1585, the formerly Protestant city had become a stronghold of Counter-Reformation Catholicism seeking to repair the destruction of widespread iconoclasm and vigorously assert the role of images as instruments of devotion. The peaceable conditions of the Twelve Year Truce (1609–1621) favored a renewal of commerce, while the vigorous patronage of Antwerp artists by the Habsburg Archdukes Albert and Isabella lent increased cultural and social prestige to art collecting among Antwerp's elites. In this same period a new genre of painting emerged and flourished in the city of Antwerp: pictures depicting private collections in an 'art cabinet' or *constkamer*. From their inception, gallery or *constkamer* pictures, were not accurate records of real collections, but were instead fabricated images that programmatically asserted a set of arguments proclaiming the multiple values of art and the elevated status of its patrons and admirers. *Constkamer* pictures most frequently did not reproduce actual works of art. Instead, these fictional collections featured pictures that were recognizable by their genre and style as works by Antwerp's important past and present artists, while often conscripting these familiar looking paintings into broader allegorical schemes. Consequently, the genre as a whole operated within a dynamic structure that invited viewers, on one hand, to recognize and appreciate the individual works represented in the gallery as indicators of material objects that exist in the present, and on the other

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hand, to see them as elements within an abstract allegory, often one concerning the role of pictures in promoting piety, knowledge, and virtue.

Personification was a key device for the production of allegorical meaning in *constkamer* pictures, appearing not only in the artworks that fill the galleries but also occasionally as figures inhabiting the space of the gallery. The hybrid structure of personification that ascribes abstract meaning to embodied form made it a ready and ubiquitous vehicle of political, religious, and humanist discourses in European early modern visual culture. The codification of personifications in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, an iconographic dictionary originally published in 1593 and then expanded into a larger second edition in 1603, would suggest that what artists and their audiences primarily sought in personification was a stable system of meaning. But it was also the potential multiplicity of personification's effects that made it such an attractive rhetorical form for artists.¹ The capacity of personification to generate signification *as figure*, as well as through its ascribed conventional concepts, was a matter of vital interest in the dynamic, rapidly transforming visual culture of seventeenth-century Antwerp. Personification was particularly well suited to this context where pictures were valued as manifestations of Catholic humanist values, and as material commodities circulating in a burgeoning open market. Personification's marriage of elevated concepts to naturalistic representation of the human figure also made it an apt device by which the seventeenth-century artist might demonstrate his own virtue and excellence. In this chapter I will argue that in Frans Francken the Younger's *Painter's Cabinet*, we can see how these multiple values of pictures coalesce and compete in the personification Fortuna. While the genre of gallery pictures promotes seeing paintings as elements supporting stable allegorical systems of meaning, the mobility of art objects as commodities in the risky terrain of the marketplace generates destabilizing effects. Fortuna precariously balances these diverse meanings in Franken's unusual image of the artist at work in a picture gallery.

Seeing Allegorically in the *Constkamer*

In the *Painter's Cabinet* the Antwerp artist Frans Francken the Younger offers an intimate view of a painter at work in a finely appointed chamber [Fig. 22.1]. Paintings crowd the walls, decorate the richly carved mantelpiece, and are

¹ See Baskins C. – Rosenthal L., *Early Modern Visual Allegory: Embodying Meaning* (Aldershot – Burlington: 2007).



FIGURE 22.1 *Frans Francken the Younger, The Painter's Cabinet (c. 1627). Oil on panel, 54 × 69 cm.*

PRIVATE COLLECTION, LAS ARENAS, GETXO, SPAIN.

propped against the fireplace. A table at the left foreground overflows with books, one of which lies opened on the floor. At the right a second table, laden with fine jewelry and objects of silver and gold, holds a carved chest into which a youth empties a sack of gold coins. An elegantly attired couple, patrons or clients, attentively observes the artist seated before his easel at the center of the depicted space. His attention is fully upon his labors, steadying his hand with a maulstick as he touches the surface of his large picture with his brush. His gaze, however, is not on the painting he is completing, but on the nude model posing improbably while balanced upon a globe. She appears to return his gaze calmly as she gracefully holds a red veil that billows in a breeze that also lifts and flutters the pages of the opened books and agitates the cloth covering the table at the left. A young apprentice on a low stool hunches over his exercise as he draws a sculpted bust that lies on the floor. Francken has carefully positioned the painting on the easel and the model's pose so they offer the viewer a view of the figure, both 'in the flesh' and as the artist's painted image. The identity of this figure as the personification of Fortuna would have been immediately apparent to the educated humanist audience to whom this kind of painting was pitched. Here she enacts her central attribute of instability as

she stands precariously on the globe and manipulates her veil like a sail buffeted by erratic and unpredictable winds.²

The *Painter's Cabinet* inventively displays the range of genres produced by the prolific and highly successful studio of Frans Francken the Younger (1581–1642), a third-generation member of the Francken family dynasty of painters in Antwerp. Trained by his father, Frans Francken the Elder, Frans the Younger became a master in 1605; in 1615 he was named Dean of the Antwerp St. Luke's painters' guild. Like the paintings on view in this image, the extensive body of works attributed to the Francken workshop consists predominantly of small-format cabinet pictures of religious, mythological, and allegorical subjects. This picture also demonstrates Frans Francken the Younger's important role as one of the originators of gallery pictures.³

Despite its unusual inclusion of the artist at work in the art cabinet, Frans the Younger's *Painter's Cabinet* is consistent with many of his workshop's gallery pictures in its invitation to seek a unifying theme among its disparate elements. *Constkamer* pictures often were constructed as allegories proclaiming the visual arts as the handmaiden of piety and virtue.⁴ In the *Painter's Cabinet* Francken engages and guides our attention to the brightly-lit image on the mantel, the large painting on the back wall, directly above the artist and visiting couple, and the work in-progress on the easel. The central picture on the back wall depicts the Death of Seneca as a somber night scene. It is flanked on the left by a Crucifixion, and on the right by an Adoration of the Magi. The mantel picture is another narrative subject, Croesus Showing Solon his Wealth. Considered together, these subjects coalesce around the theme of a virtuous death and Christian salvation.⁵ Seneca, condemned to death by the Emperor Nero, met his fate calmly thus demonstrating his Stoic philosophy that promoted the exercise of reason as a means of controlling the volatile, dangerous effects of human passions and appetites. As recounted by Herodotus, Croesus, the King of Lydia, mistakenly believed that his wealth would ensure happiness. It was the wise stranger, Solon, who made the king understand that the

2 Padrón M.D. – Royo-Villanova M., *David Teniers, Jan Brueghel y los Gabinetes de Pinturas*, (Madrid: 1992) 192–194, cat. no. 24.

3 Härting U., *Frans Francken der Jüngere (1581–1642. Die Gemälde mit Kritischem Oeuvrekatalogue* (Freren: 1989). Francken has been frequently credited as the inventor of the gallery picture. See Filipczak Z., *Picturing Art in Antwerp, 1550–1700* (Princeton: 1987) 62, n. 17.

4 Härting U., “Doctrina et Pietas: Über Frühe Galeriebilder”, *Jaarboek van het Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten te Antwerpen* (1993) 95–133; and Stoichita V., *The Self-Aware Image: An Insight in Early Modern Meta-Painting*, trans A.-M. Glasheen (Cambridge: 1997) 112, 127.

5 Padrón, *Gabinetes de Pinturas* 194.

only happiness of lasting value was posthumous honor achieved as the result of a virtuous life.⁶ These subjects from antiquity stand in dialogue with New Testament subjects: the Adoration and the Crucifixion establish the Christian meanings of the virtuous life: humankind must (like the Magi) recognize Christ and live so as to be worthy of his love and his suffering for our salvation.

The logic of the theme would have unfolded with particular force within the intellectual framework of Neostoicism, a philosophy that was widely embraced in the Netherlands and was especially robust in Antwerp.⁷ Neostoicism's revival of Roman Stoic thought and its reconciliation with Catholicism was forged in the work of Justus Lipsius (1547–1606) who advocated *tranquillitas animi* and *constantia* as key personal and political virtues. Frans Francken included portraits of Lipsius in at least two gallery pictures; in the *Painter's Cabinet* the philosopher's key concepts are on view.⁸ Here the Neostoic program appears to complete and resolve Fortuna's meaning: she is the erratic force against which *tranquillitas* and *constantia* must be won through the exercise of intellectual rationality and Catholic faith.

In the *Painter's Cabinet* Fortuna inhabits the space both as an embodied presence and as an effect of the artist's skill. Her physical presence underscores *how* as well as *what* Fortuna signified in early modern Europe. The representation of Fortuna as a female figure was not merely conventional but inhered in her body: her defining attribute of fickle changeability was consistent with deeply ingrained concepts of women as subject to irrational effects of bodily origin, especially attributable to the excitability of the womb.⁹ Fortuna's nudity, well established in Renaissance iconography, embeds and displays this seemingly natural cause of her unpredictability and asserts her force in specifically gendered terms. Fortuna's unpredictable powers richly permeated the culture of Europe where she loomed large as a threat to general political and social order and as the enemy of masculine, civic *virtù*. Machiavelli's assertion in *The Prince* that 'Fortune is a woman and it is necessary, in order to keep her under, to cuff and maul her' posits the disordering dangers of a topsy-turvy world presided over by an unruly woman.¹⁰

6 Shapiro S., "Herodotus and Solon", *Classical Antiquity* 15,2 (1996) 348–364.

7 Morford M., *Stoics and Neostoics: Rubens and the Circle of Lipsius* (Princeton: 1991).

8 Härting, "Doctrina et Pietas" 117–119.

9 See Laqueur T., *Making Sex: The Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA – London: 1990); and Maclean I., *The Renaissance Notion of Woman* (Cambridge – New York: 1990).

10 Translation from Pitkin H., *Fortune is a Woman: Gender and Politics in the Thought of Niccolò Machiavelli* (Berkeley – Los Angeles: 1984). On early modern iconography and concepts of Fortune, see Thompson L., *Fortune: "All is but Fortune"* (Washington, DC: 2000).

Lipsius, following Machiavelli, strongly associated femininity with the weakness and disorder arising from the lack of mastery over the passions and appetites, especially lust, which he denounced as a ‘womanish vice’.¹¹ Francken’s painting signals within its allegorical logic this more general coding of base bodily desires as feminine (or, for a man, effeminizing) in the two paintings propped against the fireplace, positioned in close proximity to the body of Fortuna. In the front is a mythological scene of violence spurred by lust. Here Hercules, a figure most typically associated with virtue in seventeenth-century culture, is in a murderous struggle with the centaur Eurytion over the woman Deianeira. Hercules wins the woman who later, in a jealous rage, poisons him. In the seventeenth century this story was familiar from Seneca’s *Hercules Oetaeus*, where it exemplified the stoic condemnation of destructive passions. In opposition to the Hercules myth, the *Assumption of the Magdalen* denotes the triumph of spiritual salvation over fleshly sin.¹²

Interpreting the *Painter’s Cabinet* as an allegory of Constancy allows us to see how the figure of Fortuna demonstrates the full realization of personification’s hybrid structure. Within the picture’s Neostoic framework she generates meaning both as a concept and as an embodied figure, and appears to be the stable negative term around which its discourse of virtue coheres.

Fortuna, Occasio, and Artistic Virtue

In the Francken workshop, however, Fortuna had broader associations. In several works Fortuna, conflated with her close correlate Opportunity, or Occasio, presides over the artist’s praiseworthy pursuit of fame and honor among men of learning. In one such *Allegory of Opportunity* a painter at work at his easel is prominently featured among figures representing the arts and sciences [Fig. 22.2]. Raised above the crowd on a high pedestal is the statue of a woman combining the attributes of Fortuna and Occasio: balanced on a globe like Fortuna, her winged feet and long lock of hair identify her as Opportunity who must be seized before she swiftly passes by; the razor she holds aloft can sever the threads of fate. The picture’s reigning conceit is the flourishing of the arts and sciences under the auspices of Good Government, while the inclusion

11 Lipsius Justus, *Sixte Bookes of Politics or Civil Doctrine*, trans William Jones (London, Richard Fields for William Ponsonby: 1594) Bk. iv, chap. xii.

12 Ripollés C. “Death, Femininity, and the Art of Painting in Frans Francken’s *The Painter’s Studio*”, in Wade M. (ed.), *Gender Matters: Discourses of Violence in Early Modern Literature and the Arts* (Amsterdam – New York: 2014) 309–329.

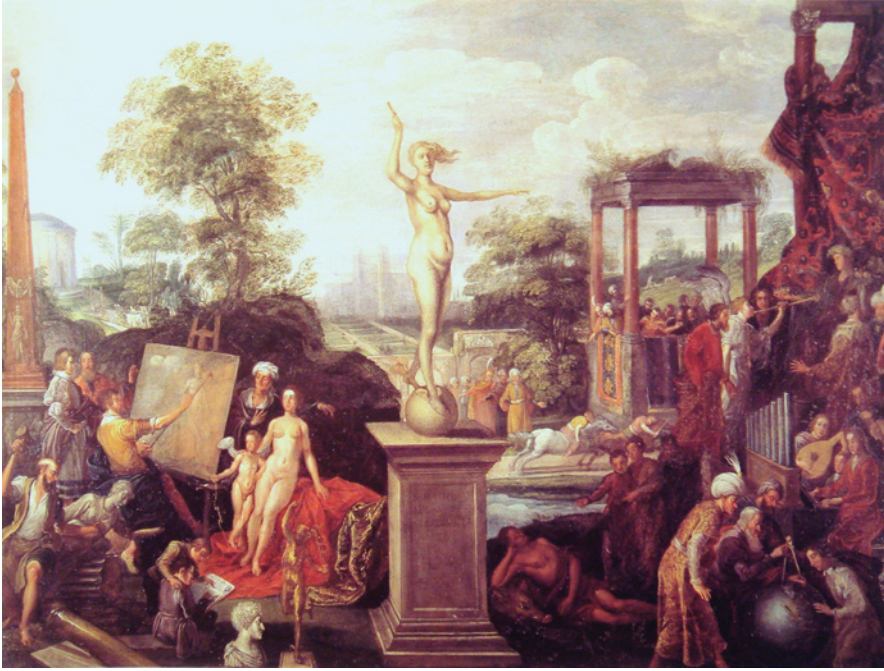


FIGURE 22.2 *Workshop of Frans Francken the Younger, Allegory of Opportunity (c. 1628). Oil on panel, 48.5 × 66.5. Périgueux, Musée d'Art et d'Archéologie du Périgord. IMAGE © MUSÉE D'ART ET D'ARCHÉOLOGIE DU PÉRIGORD.*

of the artist among these benefits asserts the high cultural value of what he produces.¹³

The arts of Painting and Sculpture command the painting's entire left foreground. The painter is in the act of rendering Venus and Cupid who pose before him, with a turbaned old woman as chaperone. His position above the roughly-clad stoneworker wielding his hammer recalls the traditional trope of the *paragone*, the comparison between painting and sculpture. Painting's

13 Kiefer F., "The Conflation of Fortuna and Occasio in Renaissance Thought and Iconography", *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 9–10 (1979) 1–27; Miramonde A.P. de, "Les allégories politiques de l'Occasion' de Frans Francken II", *Gazette de Beaux-Arts* 67 (1966) 129–144; and Panofsky E., "Good Government or Fortune? The Iconography of a Newly Discovered Composition by Rubens", *Gazette de Beaux-Arts* 68 (1966) 306–326. Miramonde notes this picture's damaged condition resulting from over-cleaning. Other versions of this subject by the Francken workshop are in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg and the Wawel Palace Museum, Kraków.

superiority is clear in this figure's fine clothing and refined technique as he, like his counterpart in the *Painter's Cabinet*, steadies his hand with the maulstick. Here too, two on-lookers admire his creation while the youthful apprentice at his feet, in this case aided by one of his peers, concentrates on his drawing. The artist is not merely one of the benefits of Good Government: he, like the enthroned figure on the right, is an exemplar of the man who has seized his opportunity. As the motto on the pedestal exhorts, 'do not allow the advantageous enterprise to flee; Opportunity's front offers her generous lock of hair, but the back is bald'.¹⁴ In other words, grab her before she passes you by.

Francken's *Allegory of Opportunity* enlarges our understanding of the encounter between the artist and Fortuna in the *Painter's Cabinet* as the enactment of a particular confluence of notions of artistic virtue. The motif of the painter rendering a female model became widespread in Netherlandish art in the early seventeenth century and was deployed in new ways to represent the Art of Painting. As Eric Jan Sluijter has argued, Venus, as the object of the artist's gaze, was valued for her capacity to provoke the artist's love of beauty and elicit sensual, even erotic delight.¹⁵ (The inclusion of the older woman as chaperone for Venus in the *Allegory of Opportunity* might well underscore this notion of art inspired by desire.) Elsewhere Francken depicts the artist's love as tempered by the science of art. This idea is put forth programmatically in a drawing now in the Louvre representing the *Painter and Poet* [Fig. 22.3]. The artist, whose pose mirrors the painter in the *Painter's Cabinet*, executes a large allegorical scene depicting Geometry, personified here as a female nude, triumphant over Ignorance.¹⁶ The accompanying text declares the importance of sound training and diligence in the pursuit of artistic achievement: 'While you are young learn good art; many who made a fervent beginning have stopped along the way' ('te wylent ghij Jonck sijt, leert goed const, nock veeul sijnder onder bleven, die nochtans lusstich begonsten.'). 'Good art' ('goed const') refers in this context to geometry as the scientific grounding of artistic practice that establishes the painter as the intellectual equal of the poet. Desire, the 'lusstich' impulse, is not enough; it must be balanced by proper training and knowledge. This is the artistic corollary of Neostoic mastery of passions by reason: the artist must temper his passions with science.

14 'Rem tibi quam / Noces aptam/ Dmittere noli / Fronte Capil (capillis?) / Lata est / Sed post / Occasio Calva', as cited in Miramonde, "Allégories Politiques" 132.

15 Sluijter E.J., "Venus, Visus and Pictura", in idem, *Seductress of Sight: Studies in Dutch Art of the Golden Age* (Zwolle: 2000) 86–159.

16 Filipczak, *Picturing Art in Antwerp* 115.



FIGURE 22.3 *Frans Francken the Younger, The Painter and the Poet (1618). Pen with brown and blue ink, brown wash on paper, 29.1 × 19.8 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre (Inv. No. 19981).*

IMAGE © RMN-GRAND PALAIS/ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK.

In the *Painter's Cabinet* Neostoic virtues support specifically artistic virtues. The artist tames and contains Fortuna's powers by transforming her into an image. Consistent with the ideals of Neostoic constancy, he enacts his mastery over her disordering powers and uses her, like a man of *virtù*, to promote his excellence. The picture on the easel demonstrates the artist's command of what Karel van Mander described in his *Schilder-Boek* (1604) as essential abilities for the painter: rendering 'from life' (*nae t'leven*) and from imagination or visual memory (*uyt den gheest*).¹⁷ Francken's painter, shown in the act of painting from life, confirms that his command of the figure is grounded in his observational skill. Rendering her over water specifies her as *Fortuna Marina* who reigns over all voyages, literal and metaphorical.¹⁸ It also demonstrates his capacity to represent aspects of nature too much in flux ever to be captured *nae t'leven*.

Signifying both as material body and iconographic concept, Fortuna intertwines Neostoic and artistic virtue: the man who faces her will be tested in his constancy; the artist who can represent her displays his mimetic skill and learned discernment. In this account, the picture on the easel denotes his virtuous dedication to constancy while also serving as evidence of his artistic excellence.

The Artist in the *Constkamer*: Consumption and Production

The inclusion of the artist at work in the gallery is unusual, even exceptional, within the conventions of *constkamer* images, which typically stressed the consumption rather than production of art. A *Collector's Cabinet* recently attributed to Adriaen van Stalbeemt, for example, creates an imaginary space devoted solely to the display and viewing of collectable objects [Fig. 22.4].¹⁹ Increasing prosperity made art collecting possible for a wider population of cultivated middle classes, while the elevated social status connected to it made collecting an attractive means of emulating the nobility and gaining prestige. The elegant figures in gallery pictures, often accessorized with swords—the ready sign of noble rank—belie the fact that most Antwerp collectors were merchants, lawyers, and civil servants. Images of collections helped consolidate the emergent

17 See Melion W., *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon* (Chicago: 1991) 60–70; and Swan C., "Ad vivum, naer het leven, from the life': Considerations on a Mode of Representation", *Word and Image* 11 (1995) 353–372.

18 See Frans Francken the Younger, *Allegory of Fortuna*, c. 1615–1620, Louvre.

19 Padrón, *Gabinetes de Pinturas* 195–201, cat. no. 25.



FIGURE 22.4 Adriaen van Stalbeem, *A Collector's Cabinet* (c. 1621). Oil on panel, 93 × 114 cm. Madrid, Museo del Prado (Inv. No. 1.405).

IMAGE © ERICH LESSING/ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK.

self-conscious identity of these art collectors who, beginning in 1602, could register in a new category of membership established in the Antwerp painters guild, as 'lovers of painting' (*liefhebbers der schilderyen*).²⁰

Many gallery pictures, like the van Stalbeem, refer to the 'encyclopedic' aims of early modern collecting by including *artes* (painting and sculpture), *naturalia*, (the shells and coral), and *artificialia*, represented here by the device on the table at the left, the recently-invented barometer, believed in this period to be a perpetual motion machine. The entire collection was understood to

20 Filipczak, *Picturing Art in Antwerp* 51–53; Honig E., *Painting and the Market in Early Modern Antwerp* (New Haven – London: 1998) 205–206; Timmermans B., "The Elite as Collectors and Middlemen in the Antwerp Art World of the Seventeenth Century", in Van der Stighelen K. (ed.), *Munuscula Amicorum: Contributions on Rubens and His Colleagues in Honor of Hans Vlieghe*, vol. 2 (Turnhout: 2006) 343–362. Some important collectors in Antwerp, such as Nicolaas Rockox, did obtain patents of nobility.

reflect the macrocosm in microscopic form, conveying both the mystery of God's wondrous creation and the ingenuity of human arts and sciences.²¹ In Van Stalbeem's *Collector's Cabinet* personification operates as the privileged term condensing these broader allegorical claims. The central, largest painting on the back wall depicts Pictura, the personification of Painting, being rescued from Ignorance by Fame and Wisdom. Pictura's body is ideally arrayed for our sight: we too, like the *liefhebbers* pictured here, can find knowledge and virtue in our active consumption of pictures arranged and ordered into a coherent unity. Identifying with these ideals means spurning the violent iconoclasm enacted by beastly figures with animals' heads in the painting propped against the chair. Here pictures are reduced to material objects and are doubly dislodged from the order of the *constkamer* as they are torn down from the wall and ripped from their frames.

Aside from the *Painter's Cabinet*, the only other pictures from the Francken circle where we see an artist at work in a gallery show Pictura herself as that artist. In Frans Francken the Younger's *Allegory of Painting, Poetry, and Music*, Pictura at her easel is joined by personifications of Music and Poetry, as well as groups of *liefhebbers* [Fig. 22.5].²² A man looking outward from the far right edge is probably a portrait, quite possibly that of the patron of the image.²³ Several works in the gallery depict subjects from Francken the Younger's oeuvre, including the large *Allegory of Immortal Fame of the Arts* above the mantel and the *Judgment of King Midas* on the easel.²⁴ This Ovidian tale (*Metamorphoses* Book 10, ll. 150–194) recounts how Apollo punished the foolish king by giving him asses' ears after Midas declared Pan's music to be better than Apollo's. As a whole, the *Allegory of Painting* promotes the interconnection of the arts,

21 Briels J., "De Antwerpse Kunstverzamelaar Peeter Steven (1599–1668) en zijn constkamer", *Jaarboek van het Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten Antwerpen* (1980) 137–226.

22 See Haeften J. van, *Dutch and Flemish Old Master Paintings*, Catalogue 12 (London: 2002) cat. no. 15; and Dekoninck R., "Ad Vivum: Pictorial and Spiritual Imitation in the *Allegory of the Pictura Sacra* by Frans Francken II", in Melion W. – Dekoninck R. – Guiderdoni-Bruslé A. (eds.), *Ut Pictura Meditatio: The Meditative Image in Northern Art, 1500–1700* (Turnhout: 2012) 317–336. Dekoninck suggests that this work can be understood as a pendant to the *Allegory of Pictura Sacra* where Pictura is at her easel in a room full of sacred pictures.

23 Härting, in Van Haeften, *Dutch and Flemish Old Master Paintings* cat. no. 15, suggests this figure is Frans Francken the Elder and that the small portrait on the mantel is a self-portrait of Frans the Younger. Ariane van Suchtelen prefers to identify this figure as the patron. See Suchtelen A. van – Beneden B. van, *Room for Art in Seventeenth-Century Antwerp* (Zwolle: 2009) 27.

24 Härting, *Frans Francken* cat. nos. 276–298, 381–382.



FIGURE 22.5 *Frans Francken the Younger, Allegory of Painting, Poetry, and Music (1636). Oil on panel, 93.5 × 123.3 cm. Private collection.*

IMAGE © BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY/PRIVATE COLLECTION/JOHNNY VAN HAEFTEN LTD., LONDON.

with Painting primary among them; their enduring value; and the vital role of sophisticated connoisseurs equipped to exercise their good judgment.

Ursula Härting has argued that this picture specifically binds these themes to the Guild of St. Luke and Francken's role as Dean. The embossed leather chair in the center foreground bears the guild's coat of arms, referring to the practice of deans donating their 'dean's chair'. Francken's signature on a piece of paper at the chair's foot expressly designates his guild affiliation with the title 'OVTVER VAN DE CVSK', or 'Author of the Chamber for Painting [*Camer Voor Schilder Konst*]'.²⁵ The picture proposes that the guild brings together in a direct, unmediated relationship *Pictura* as the source of painting, with the *liefhebbers* who collect it. Pictures seem to arrive in the beautifully arrayed *constkamer* as a product of pure inspiration without passing through the art

25 Härting, in Van Haeften, *Dutch and Flemish Old Master Paintings*, cat. no. 15.



FIGURE 22.6 *Frans Francken the Younger, An Artist's Studio. Pen and brown ink with brown wash over black chalk on laid paper, 20.4 by 31.7 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Julius S. Held Collection, Accession no. 1985.1.32.a.*
COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART.

marketplace as commodities. This designation of the guild as the institution that sanctions the space where inspired creation and learned consumption meet overlooks its strong efforts throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to regulate the art market during a period of growth and expansion.²⁶

The guild is evoked differently in the *Painter's Cabinet*, where the depicted painter, recalling the figure of the artist in the Louvre drawing, and *Pictura* in the *Allegory of Painting, Poetry and Music*, is accompanied by his studious apprentice, as in the *Allegory of Opportunity* [Figs. 22.2–3]. With the apprentice at his side, the painter's praiseworthy aspects include his role as master artist charged to instruct the next generation in the practices of 'good art' (*goed[e] const*). Francken deliberately represents the apprentice as a pupil in these images, as well as in a lovely drawing of an *Artist's Studio* in the National Gallery in Washington [Fig. 22.6], where the painter and apprentice are at work in a spacious and elegantly outfitted *constkamer*. Similarly to his counterpart in the *Painter's Cabinet* studying the antique bust, the apprentice in the drawing copies a painting, both activities reflecting common techniques for instruction used in seventeenth-century workshops. This emphasis on

26 Vermeylen F., *Painting for the Market: Commercialization of Art in Antwerp's Golden Age* (Turnhout: 2006).



FIGURE 22.7 *Maarten de Vos, Saint Luke Painting the Virgin (c. 1602). Oil on panel, 270 × 217 cm. Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerpen.*
IMAGE © KIK-IRPA, BRUSSELS.

teaching and study specifically turns away from depicting the painter's apprentice engaged in the material labor of grinding pigments, a motif that Francken would have encountered in Maarten de Vos's central panel of the triptych that was erected in 1602 above the Guild of St. Luke altar in Antwerp's Cathedral of Our Lady [Fig. 22.7].

Thus far I have noted how Francken's images of the painter in the *constkamer* idealize art-making as entailing inspired creation and diligent study. In the *Painter's Cabinet* however, Francken also presents this imaginary space as the site of production and commercial exchange. The marketplace that was excluded in the *Allegory of Painting, Poetry and Music* is represented in the *Painter's Cabinet* in terms that aim to ally its values to this picture's other reigning discourses of mastery and triumphant virtue. However, as I will contend, this proves to be a tricky business, one that returns us to further questions about Fortuna's role.

Mercury and Fortuna: 'Art Made Against the Force of Fortune'

In the preceding account, the picture on the easel in the *Painter's Cabinet* denotes the artist's virtuous constancy and artistic excellence. But it is also a portable commodity for sale, and, judging from their focused gaze onto it, the couple standing behind the artist appear to be interested buyers. Whereas the *liefhebbers* we have seen in other works admire and discuss paintings that have already entered a collection, here the setting refers both to the consumption *and* the production of art. The artist at work with his apprentice beside him suggests that this imaginary *constkamer* is also an idealized studio or workshop, organized according to guild dictates. Introducing clients into the site of production accords with actual practices in Antwerp where even as the open market for paintings in Antwerp increased the range of venues for the purchase of art, the more elite collectors continued to buy pictures directly from artists' workshops.²⁷ This couple's elegant costumes, including the obligatory sword for the gentleman, indicate their high rank; the bulging sack of coins that their servant empties into the cask makes evident their willingness to pay. The depicted space operates simultaneously as a *constkamer*, as a site of production, and as a shop with wares for sale.

This scene of high-level sale in the *Painter's Cabinet* aims to present art's commercial aspect as an additional element of its value. The painting depicts the multiple productive activities of the painter's studio as a site where laudable goods of value are made and sold, and as the workshop where, in a fertile and orderly system, the next generation of artists are trained. Frans Francken the Younger was in an especially auspicious position to assert such claims.

27 Van der Stichelen K. – Vermeylen F., "The Antwerp Guild of Saint Luke and the Marketing of Paintings, 1400–1700", in Marchi N. de – Miegroet H. van (eds.), *Mapping Markets for Paintings in Europe 1450–1750* (Turnhout: 2006) 188–208.

Trained in the workshop of his father, Frans the Elder, Frans the Younger benefitted from the previous generation's early adaptation to emergent conditions favoring larger-scale production of smaller-format paintings for a growing open market. In the course of his own career, Frans the Younger implemented techniques for increased production by calling upon the assistance of his two brothers and later, his four sons. The result was the dissemination of a highly successful 'Francken style' dispersed across several family workshops and copied by others, possibly with Frans the Younger's consent and oversight. The greatest share of pictures from the Francken workshop were produced in large numbers for sale on the open market, including overseas export to Seville, and quite likely, to Paris as well. The prevalence of workshop copies of varying quality seems to have had a role in the fluctuating prices at which his works sold during his lifetime and beyond. Nonetheless, these practices succeeded in establishing Frans the Younger's workshop as a vital player in the commercialization of painting in the early modern Netherlands.²⁸

Fortuna, of course, was a force of considerable concern for the mercantile culture of Antwerp that proudly represented itself as under the sign of Mercury, god of eloquence and commerce [Fig. 22.8]. Mercury was also the particular patron of painters, as is celebrated in Jan Saenredam's engraving after a design by Hendrick Goltzius [Fig. 22.9]. Depicted as a bronze statue in the left foreground, Mercury performs this same role in the *Allegory of Opportunity* [Fig. 22.2]. These two figures, Mercury and Fortuna, meet in an emblem that strongly resonates with the Francken *Painters Cabinet*, the "Ars Naturam Adiuuans", from the 1581 Antwerp edition of Andrea Alciato's *Emblemata* [Fig. 22.10]. Mercury and Fortuna in the emblem closely mirror the poses of the artist and Fortuna in the painting, including such details as Mercury's pointing gesture and the painter's extended hand. These formal consonances suggest Francken's plausible awareness of this emblem not as a determining source, but as material that he might shape to his purposes.²⁹ Those purposes, I would claim, include embedding the values of commerce among art's praiseworthy aspects.

28 Peeters N., "Marked for the Market? Continuity, Collaboration and the Mechanics of Artistic Production of History Painting in the Francken Workshops in Counter-Reformation Antwerp", *Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art* 50 (1999) 58–79; and Peeters N., "From Nicolaas to Constantijn: the Francken Family and Their Rich Artistic Heritage (c. 1550–1717)", in Brosens K. – Kelchtermans L. – Van der Stighelen K. (eds.), *Family Ties: Art Production and Kinship Patterns in the Early Modern Low Countries* (Turnhout: 2012) 103–117.

29 Ripollés, "Death, Femininity and the Art of Painting" 325–327, discusses the connection of this emblem to Francken's *Painter's Cabinet*.



FIGURE 22.8 Johann Sadeler I, after Maarten de Vos, Mercury, from the series *Planetarum effectus et eorum in signis zodiaci* (The Seven Planets) (1585). Engraving, 24.2 × 24.7 cm. The Baltimore Museum of Art, Garrett Collection, BMA 1946.112.6894. PHOTOGRAPHY BY MITRO HOOD.

In addition to the formal resonances between Alciato's emblem and Francken's painting, the verse accompanying the emblem recalls the exhortation to 'learn good art' (*leert goed const*) in the caption of Francken's drawing of the *Painter and Poet* [Fig. 22.3]. Alciato's verse reads:

As Fortune on her sphere, so Mercury sits upon his cube;
He presides over the arts, she over chance events.
Art is made against the force of fortune



FIGURE 22.9 Jan Saenredam after Hendrick Goltzius, Mercury and his Children (1596). Engraving, 257 × 180 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-OB-10.599.



FIGURE 22.10 "Ars naturam Adiuuans. Emblema xcviII", in Alciato, *Omnia Andreae Alciati v.c. emblemata* (Antwerp, Christopher Plantin: 1581). Engraving.
COURTESY OF THE RARE BOOK & MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN.

But when Fortune is bad, it often requires the help of art.
 Therefore eager youths, learn the good arts,
 That have with them the advantages of certain fate.³⁰

The 'good arts' in which Mercury can instruct us, and which the master passes on to his apprentices, includes not only skill at the easel but skill in the marketplace as well. Upholding the virtues of 'Art made against the force of fortune', the *Painter's Cabinet* heroizes the artist's capacity to control Fortune's inconstancy in the marketplace by producing works of enduring worth. Within this rhetorical framework the picture elevates and idealizes the commodity value of pictures, deploying the personification of Fortuna to represent its intertwined Neostoic, artistic, and mercantile discourses.

Allegorical Order and Mastery in the Marketplace

Fortuna has maintained her balance throughout this discussion with remarkable grace, even as I have burdened her with a surfeit of meaning. But rendered as the artist's model she continues to present an on-going conundrum: how does she hold that pose? Francken's formal design seems carefully calculated to frame and contain her. She takes her position perfectly among the pictures surrounding her, the dark background emphasizing her glowing flesh. Her globe is positioned with unambiguous clarity in the rationalized space marked by the floor tiles, and is lit by the same light that consistently casts leftward shadows throughout the picture. Everything in the painting conspires to hold Fortuna in place. And not only Fortuna. The picture's rectilinearity and multiple acts of framing order its overarching allegorical structure. Christian and pagan scenes, examples of wisdom and of its failure—these are arrayed in careful and harmonious balance as elements that collectively convey timeless truths. In this respect the *Painter's Cabinet* operates like the other *constkamer* pictures we have seen where the stable, lucid disposition of artworks and objects in the space generates a meaningful moral pattern.

But, as the two clients who discreetly offer their sack of gold remind us, here in the workshop, it is all for sale. Pictures, we are reminded, are material, mobile, fungible. This was perhaps especially so in Antwerp where art circulated through multiple sites of exchange including auctions, estate sales,

30 Translation from *Alciato's Book of Emblems the Memorial Web Edition in Latin and English* at <http://www.mun.ca/alciato/099.html>. See also Panofsky, "Good Government" 306–326.

Friday Markets, and increasingly, art dealers.³¹ Whereas the *liefhebbers* in works like van Stalbeem's *Collector's Cabinet* model connoisseurship and allegorical understanding of a complete and unified collection, the clients in the *Painter's Cabinet* will break this picture's allegorical unity when they complete their transaction and leave with their purchase in hand. Arrayed in the sales-room as objects for purchase destined for unknown contexts, pictures cannot secure intertextual meaning as they do in the closed chamber of the *constkamer*. Like the violence of iconoclasm that, as noted above, wrests pictures from their systems of meaning, commodity values, even when allied in the painting to Neostoic values, potentially disrupt the Christian ethical order of the *constkamer*. Marketplace values that require pictures to circulate as objects of exchange cannot in the end fully be conscripted to support the *Painter's Cabinet's* rhetoric of virtue that relies upon stasis and stability.

Or can they? The encounter with Fortuna that Francken the Younger stages displays the artist's constancy and his mastery of art. It also offers a good view of the Francken 'brand' known especially for modest-scaled multi-figure works of a wide range of subjects including some represented here such as the Adoration of the Magi, the Crucifixion, and the Solon and Croesus, an unusual subject that Frans the Younger depicted at least twice.³² The success of the Francken enterprise can be significantly attributed to Frans the Younger's keen understanding of strategies for avoiding risk in the marketplace, including the production of copies and what have been called 'derivative' pictures.³³ The *Painter's Cabinet* might be seen as advertising this skill not only in its display of works from his oeuvre like the Solon and Croesus but also in the scene of the artistic creation itself. Francken's apparent depiction of the artist working *nae t'leven*, strains against the spatial construction of the scenario: the painter in the image cannot see Fortuna in the frontal view that he represents on his canvas. However, we see the posing figure and the painting of her from the same point of view; the two images are ideally arranged for our eye, inviting us to see the figure as simultaneously made and re-made. Francken the artist

31 Honig, *Painting and the Market* 108–114; and Van der Stighelen – Vermeylen, "Marketing of Paintings" 200–202.

32 A *Solon and Croesus* by Frans Francken the Younger in the Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum is very similar to the one depicted in the *Painter's Cabinet*. Härting, *Frans Francken*, includes another version as cat. no. 318.

33 Marchi N. de – Miegroet H. van, "Uncertainty, Family Ties and Derivative Painting in Seventeenth-Century Antwerp", in Brosens K. – Kelchtermans L. – Van der Stighelen K. (eds.), *Family Ties: Art Production and Kinship Patterns in the Early Modern Low Countries* (Turnhout: 2012) 53–74.

outside of the frame painted both the posing figure of Fortuna and the depicted picture of her, demonstrating that when a buyer takes away a picture, a copy can quickly take its place. Francken shows us the workshop and site of sale where pictures are made, exchanged for money, and taken away; at the same time the space functions as a *constcamer* where copies do not simply re-stock depleted inventory, but restore allegorical coherence and completion.

Fortuna presides over the competing systems of marketplace flux and enduring truths in the art cabinet while demonstrating analogous dynamisms in the operation of personification as a mode of signification. Fortuna condenses a range of associations demonstrating the fertility of personification's hybrid structure. At the same time, her effects are dispersed as her figure establishes formal resonances throughout the room. Her stance echoes that of St. John in the Crucifixion; the upraised arm rhymes with the Magdalen's ecstatic attitude and the struggling woman in the Hercules picture. These visual links embed Fortuna into a repertory of poses and gestures—the stuff of workshop production—and into an array of figural modes for producing meaning. The artist deploys personification, along with exemplary figures and the actors of history painting, in his active assemblage of allegorical order.

The emphasis on the Francken workshop's distinct and highly successful contributions to Antwerp's thriving art market works suggestively with the proposal that the artist depicted here is a self-portrait. The similarities between the portrait engraved by Pieter de Jode after a drawing by Anthony van Dyck for the *Iconography* and the figure in the *Painter's Cabinet* support this claim [Fig. 22.11].³⁴ The *Iconography*, published in multiple editions, aimed to be a compendium of the most distinguished statesmen, scholars, and other contributors to culture and public life, including many of Antwerp's most celebrated artists. The De Jode engraving of Frans Francken the Younger, in keeping with the reigning format for these portraits, does not include the tools of his trade. The artist's dignified bearing in the *Painter's Cabinet*—perhaps it is Francken himself—and the elevated status of his clients, create a persona that seems consistent with his presentation in the engraving. But in the painting he is in the act of making one kind of material—the woman's body in front of him, the bright patches of paint on his palette—into another of material: a picture that can be exchanged for other forms of value. In a noteworthy detail Francken has placed his signature on the moneybox. It is tempting to read this gesture as an indication of his hoped-for mastery of all of the risks, moral and mercantile, that Fortuna might present.

34 Padrón, *Gabinetes de Pinturas* 192.



FIGURE 22.11 *Pieter de Jode after Anthony van Dyck, Frans Francken the Younger (c. 1630). Engraving, 21.2 × 15.1 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Rosenwald Collection, Accession no. 1943.3. 8271. COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART.*

Philosophical constancy, artistic excellence, and mastery in the marketplace coalesce and compete in the figure of Fortuna. Generating meaning as abstract idea and embodied form, she perfectly addresses the pressing problem for actors in the Antwerp art market of the uncertain status of pictures as material objects in relation to spiritual and worldly truths. In this unusual image of the artist making a personification, Francken has theorized its complexity and dynamism for us, proposing that its hybrid structure and multivalence will always entail a delicate balancing act.

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Producing the Legible Body: Personification, the Beholder, and Tiepolo's Würzburg Frescos

Max Weintraub

In the late autumn of 1750, Giambattista Tiepolo, one of the most celebrated Venetian painters of the eighteenth century and at the age of fifty-four at the height of his artistic powers, arrived in Würzburg, in Franconia, to create a suite of frescos for Prince-Bishop Karl Phillip von Greiffenklau's Residenz. By the time Tiepolo departed the Prince-Bishop's sumptuous palace nearly three years later to return to his native Italy, he had completed what is undoubtedly his crowning artistic achievement: a 600-square-meter fresco titled the *Allegory of the Planets and the Continents* for the vaulted ceiling of the Residenz's Treppenhaus, or grand staircase.

In both its design and layout Tiepolo's fresco is formidable. In the center of the vaulted ceiling Tiepolo painted Apollo with his chariot, surrounded by putti and other gods, preparing to make his daily journey across the heavens. Above the room's architectural cornice he painted elaborate figural groupings representing each of the four continents [Fig. 23.1]. On three sides of the Treppenhaus Tiepolo depicted the personified female figures of Asia, America and Africa, each occupying its own wall and each shown with a large retinue of people and animals en route to pay homage to the figure of Europe, located on the fourth wall.¹

Tiepolo devised the four continents section of his fresco to be viewed by a beholder on the move, composing it in ways that assumed and acknowledged the constantly shifting perspective of visitors as they ascend the grand staircase toward the *Europe* fresco and the formal state rooms beyond. Such a consideration of the viewing experience would have been of some complexity, as the procession up the staircase—and the various vantage points for seeing the fresco—unfolded in several phases. Upon entering the Treppenhaus a guest would have first climbed a wide, central flight of stairs up to a midway landing.

1 Although Tiepolo's frescos are customarily referred to as the 'Four Continents', and will be throughout this chapter, it is worth pointing out that the female personifications of Asia, Africa, America and Europe have at times also been collectively referred to as the 'Four Parts of the World'.



FIGURE 23.1 *Giambattista Tiepolo, Allegory of the Planets and the Continents (1752–1753). Treppenhause ceiling fresco, Würzburg, Germany.*

As the visitor ascended this initial flight of stairs, a flight that is itself broken into two stages, Tiepolo's *America* fresco would have been visible in front of him with portions of *Asia* and *Africa* gradually coming into view on the walls to the left and right, respectively. Upon reaching the midway landing, visitors would have then turned and, reversing direction, advanced up one of the two narrower side flights, also in two stages, up to a balustraded gallery and towards *Europe*—which would have only come into full view near the end of the visitor's journey. The beholding experience was a dynamic one, with the mobile visitor never able to view the entirety of Tiepolo's ceiling all at once, but instead afforded only selective and carefully contrived views of the four continents fresco as they climbed the Treppenhause stairs.²

² For a detailed description of the staircase and analysis of the shifting viewing positions throughout the space, see Alpers S. – Baxandall M., *Tiepolo and the Pictorial Intelligence* (New Haven: 1994) 107–118. See also Levey M., *Giambattista Tiepolo: His Life and Art* (New

By way of introduction to my analysis of the spectator's experience of Tiepolo's fresco, I will begin with a simple observation. Startlingly indeterminate forms populate the *Asia*, *Africa* and *America* section of the fresco, so much so that indeterminacy might even be considered a unifying visual element of them. Few of the many figures depicted in these first three frescoed walls that the beholder encounters in the Treppenhaus are visible as cohesive bodies (I am not including the bodies depicted in *Europe* for reasons that will soon be made clear). Rather, Tiepolo continually renders human figures so incompletely, so ambiguously as to produce formal disjunctures and fragmentary forms that are problematic within and in fact seem extraneous to the conventional rhetorical function of the fresco's narrative. Consider, for example, the unresolved forms in just the immediate area around the personified figure of Asia sitting atop her elephant.

In this figural grouping Tiepolo has depicted to Asia's right a limbless torso and, nearby, a pair of disembodied hands clasped in either prayer or petition [Fig. 23.2]. Upon encountering the armless trunk and the detached hands the viewer naturally seeks to reconcile the relation of the one to the other, with the proximity of the torso to the pair of hands encouraging a reading of them as different parts of the same body.³ A relation between the otherwise discrete body parts seems further supported by the fact that there are no other suitable candidates in the immediate vicinity to which these bodiless hands could reasonably be attributed. But the orientation of the thumbs on the clasped hands destabilizes such a reading, for it is an orientation that asserts that the pair could not belong to the armless torso. Yet, in spite of this, a possible correlation between the armless man and the hands continues to declare itself on the level of their logical arrangement in the pictorial space. The visual signs continually recoding themselves distends the moment of recognition and comprehension, leaving the beholder to provide the interpretative labor so as to make sense of the figure(s) and the scene, although no clear resolution seems forthcoming.

Haven: 1986) 115–118. That Tiepolo carefully calibrated the viewer's experience of his fresco is suggested by the fact that in a preparatory chalk drawing related to the Treppenhaus ceiling the locations of America and Europe were reversed from how they appear in their final placement. By placing Europe where he did in the final fresco, Tiepolo assured that *Europe's* appearance to the visitor is delayed until after he or she makes the turn on the landing at the midway point of the staircase, at which time *Europe* also becomes the first of the four personifications to be viewed in its entirety.

3 For a discussion of the strangeness of these hands, see Levey, *Tiepolo* 132.



FIGURE 23.2 Giambattista Tiepolo, "Asia" (1752–1753). *Treppenhaus ceiling fresco, Würzburg, Germany. Detail, left section.*

To Asia's left are two figures that Tiepolo has rendered so ambiguously as to undermine the fixities of their forms and threaten the very contours and boundaries of the figures themselves. The pair in question consists of two prostrate figures located just to the right of the elephant upon which Asia sits [Fig. 23.3]. With their heads obscured by their own backsides and any anatomical detail concealed amid the folds of their clothing, the figures provide few visual cues to assist the beholder in distinguishing one from the other, or even from that which surrounds them. Indeed, Tiepolo's decision to render these figures in the same earthy, muted tones that he used for the hillside behind them allows for his vaguely figurative forms easily to be mistaken by the beholder for little more than protuberant extensions of the surrounding landscape. As these startlingly undifferentiated bodies oscillate between figure and ground, form and formlessness, it is the viewer who must use the powers of his imagination to coax these inchoate forms towards legible corporeal bodies and will unarticulated shapes into being.



FIGURE 23.3 Giambattista Tiepolo, "Asia" (1752–1753). Treppenhaus ceiling fresco, Würzburg, Germany. Detail, right section.

Pageantry, Personification and Power: Spectatorial Experience and the Ritualized Space of the Treppenhaus

With Tiepolo's commitments to formal and compositional ambiguity—and its dissimulative effects—in mind, it is worth recalling that Tiepolo's *Allegory of the Planets and Continents* is notable not just for its complexity and monumental scale but also for its location in the Residenz's grand staircase, which, like much of the rest of the palace at Würzburg, was a space whose architecture and decoration were devised to impress upon visitors the important standing of their host, the Prince-Bishop. Indeed, the Residenz, which was designed by the German architect Balthasar Neumann, was built with particular attention paid to each room's role within the intricacies of eighteenth-century court ritual, so much so that it prompted one historian to quip, 'ceremony, one could say, is built into [the Residenz's] very structure'.⁴ As with palaces elsewhere in

4 Kruckmann P.O., *Heaven on Earth: Tiepolo, Masterpieces of the Würzburg Years* (New York: 1996) 43.

Germany and France from this period, Würzburg's architectural forms closely followed its sociopolitical functions, and as a monumental allegory of the Prince Bishop's grandeur and power Tiepolo's fresco befitted the ceremonial function of the Treppenhaus space.

In the first half of the eighteenth century lavish displays of wealth and luxury, often manifested in the ceremonies of the court, played an ever-escalating role in expressing the magnificence and preeminence of even the most minor principality.⁵ Würzburg's ceremonial expenditures were particularly exorbitant, with court expenses at times consuming half of the state budget.⁶ And in the Würzburg palace, as elsewhere, meticulous attention was given to matters of social precedence and protocol, with ceremonial rituals often precisely tailored to the sociopolitical station of the guest being received.⁷ As noted in such period books on court ritual as Julius Bernhard Rohr's 1729 text *Introduction to the Science of Ceremony*, at its most elaborate the ceremonial procession of visitors up the grand staircase and into the different chambers of the palace would be prescribed down to the exact number of footsteps taken by both visitor and host.⁸

It is within the context of the Residenz's carefully calibrated formal spaces that Tiepolo took up the task of decorating the Treppenhaus ceiling with an eloquent expression of the Prince-Bishop's preeminence as enlightened ruler of Franconia.⁹ It is also within the framework of the grand staircase's significance within the ceremonial functions of the court that this chapter considers Tiepolo's solution to the Treppenhaus space and his innovative ways of representing the four continents within the well-established limits of both a courtly milieu and pictorial convention. This is not to say, however, that Tiepolo broke with iconographic tradition. In fact, his subject matter was remarkably conventional, so much so that even upon his arrival in Würzburg in 1750, Tiepolo

5 Ibid. 42.

6 Ibid.

7 Klingensmith S.J., *Utility of Splendor: Ceremony, Social Life, and Architecture at the Court of Bavaria, 1600–1800* (Chicago: 1983) 177. The reception of a diplomatic envoy by the Prince-Bishop, for example, would have been devised with extraordinary precision and consideration, with the visitor's procession through the Residenz customized to the rank of the sovereign represented, the classification of the envoy and the importance of the mission.

8 Rohr's text is particularly notable for the extraordinary attention evidently paid to even the smallest detail of the ceremonial reception. See Kruckman, *Heaven on Earth* 42–43; and Klingensmith, *Utility of Splendor* 178.

9 Tiepolo's initial commission for the Prince-Bishop was to decorate the Residenz's Kaisersaal, one of the palace's state rooms. His commission was extended to include the staircase after the completion of the Kaisersaal's frescos.

would have found personified representations of the four continents throughout the Residenz in sculptures, tapestries, stuccowork and other decorative elements. What is more, as a decorative scheme such depictions of the four continents were by the middle of the eighteenth century something of a cliché in Baroque iconography, appearing in palace staircases and ceremonial settings throughout Germany and France, including in Johann Rudolph Byss's Treppenhause ceiling fresco at Schloss Weissenstein in Pommersfelden (1717–1718), and in Charles Le Brun's staircase at Versailles (1674–1678).

But if one might be hard pressed to argue that Tiepolo presented much radically new in his choice of subject matter—relying for the most part as he did on well-established iconographies of the four continents to elucidate their symbolic meaning—it is the artist's *use* of personification that makes his presentation of them both different from pictorial tradition and unprecedented in the broader representatative context of eighteenth-century court ceremony.¹⁰ In other words, what is significant in Tiepolo's fresco is not *that* he uses personified forms, but *how* he uses personification in the service of absolutism within the ritualized space of the Treppenhause. Indeed, it is this chapter's contention that Tiepolo's *Allegory of the Planets and Continents* gathers both its potency and its force through the reorientation of personification's discursive function—predicated as it is on structures of recognition—within a new eighteenth-century schema of spectatorial experience, a schema in which power and control are fundamental.

What follows, then, is a consideration of the beholder's experience of Tiepolo's fresco within eighteenth-century aesthetic standards of viewing pleasure, at the heart of which lies the issue of viewer participation in the production and interpretation of meaning. Taking seriously the fact that the meaning of Tiepolo's *Allegory of the Planets and Continents* is deeply intertwined with its ceremonial setting, this chapter reconciles the formal and compositional logic of the fresco to a particular eighteenth-century model of aesthetic experience. Specifically, my analysis establishes connections between Tiepolo's fresco and contemporaneous aesthetic interest in the *non finito*, an art form that encouraged and, importantly, empowered the beholder imaginatively to supply what the artist did not. At the same time, I turn to the aesthetic theory of Norman Bryson who, in his book *Word and Image: French Painting of the*

10 For a discussion of Tiepolo's various iconographic sources, see Ashton M., "Allegory, Fact and Meaning in Giambattista Tiepolo's Four Continents in Würzburg", *Art Bulletin* 60 (1978) 109–111, esp. 122–125. For further discussion of Tiepolo's deviations from iconographic tradition, see Alpers – Baxandall, *Tiepolo and the Pictorial Intelligence* 162; and Wood P., *Western Art and the Wider World* (Oxford: 2014) 70–72.

Ancien Régime, puts forth a set of ideas about eighteenth century artistic practice that I consider to be particularly germane to Tiepolo's fresco and the viewing experience incited by it, and which casts into relief the artist's unique use of personification within the sociopolitical context of the grand staircase in which it appears.¹¹

In considering the beholder's perceptual experience of Tiepolo's visual imagery as he negotiates the Treppenhaus staircase, I am interested in how an analysis of his fresco might lead to much more than an inventory of iconographic meanings customarily associated with the personification of the continents of Europe, America, Asia and Africa. By shifting the focus away from an iconographic reading of the distinctive attributes, props and attendant figures that collectively identify the personifications of the four continents and onto the beholder's experience, my analysis explores the kind of work the beholder is asked to perform in the production of what is otherwise perceived to be personification's stable system of signification. Thus, while the work's title—*Allegory of the Planets and Continents*—proposes that the ceiling be considered as a unified, compositional whole, I would submit that the experience of viewing the fresco—an experience that unfolds in time and space in a deliberately orchestrated and carefully calibrated way—can productively be divided into two main parts: that part which accords the beholder a contributive role in the creation and manipulation of meaning on the one hand, and on the other that which programmatically denies that role, reducing the beholder to a mere consumer of didactic imagery.

Producing the Legible Body: "Cultivated Insufficiency" and Beholder Empowerment

Let us return once more to Tiepolo's *Asia*, and to a pair of standing figures just to the right of the prostrated bodies discussed before in order to consider how Tiepolo's representation of forms at the threshold of legibility might be seen to function within the Treppenhaus's discursive space. The pair in question, wrapped in full-length robes and standing with their backs to the viewer, all but disappear beneath their heavy drapery, a lone foreshortened forearm of the figure to the left the only tangible sign of the physical bodies concealed beneath the folds of fabric [Fig. 23.3]. As he had with the prostrate figures, Tiepolo creates a visual tension between these two figures and their surroundings,

11 Bryson N., *Word and Image: French Painting of the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge: 1981) 89–121.

positioning the pointed top of the headdress of the figure standing on the left in a way that asks it to be read as one of the crosses visible on the hillock in the background, and aligning the curved outline of his companion's hunched back so that it appears as a continuation of the landscape's own contours. A push-pull effect unfolds between visual signs that permit the forms to coalesce into human figures and visual counterforces that encourage them to merge with their surroundings. Before the beholder can even consider the broader narrative function of these figures within the larger representation that is the fresco, he must first resolve the fundamental indeterminacy of their corporeal forms and summon their bodies from out of the background into which they continually threaten to recede.

That so much of the imagery in the *Asia*, *Africa* and *America* sections hinges on the interpretative labor of the beholder to interpret its forms—and assumes a beholder's capacity to perform such acts of interpretation—seems significant, since such imagery that is not overly burdened with personification's semantic work seems at odds with its pictorial function, which is to say, with the iconographic and propagandistic clarity of the Treppenhause's ceremonial space.¹² In fact, Tiepolo's use of formal and compositional indeterminacy to emphasize incompleteness over resolution corresponds with what many scholars have identified as a strong eighteenth-century preference by critics and audiences alike for art that encourages viewers to imaginatively supply what otherwise remains unfinished—a concept and practice rooted in an aesthetic appreciation of the pleasurable aspects of indeterminacy, which came to be encapsulated by the term *non finito*.¹³

Norman Bryson and others have observed a broad aesthetic shift occurring in eighteenth-century art and art criticism, in which artists and critics

12 In their book, Alpers and Baxandall acknowledge the increased role of the spectator in Tiepolo's frescos. Through their exposition of Tiepolo's inventive use of natural light and numerous stylistic devices, the authors assert that the active engagement of the viewer in motion is a prerequisite to the successful functioning of the ceiling fresco on the level of perception and beholder experience. See Alpers – Baxandall, *Tiepolo and the Pictorial Intelligence* 162–166. Importantly, Alpers and Baxandall give little attention to Tiepolo's inventive stylistic complexities within the political and politicized milieu in which the frescos were experienced.

13 For a useful introduction to the aesthetic foundations of the *non finito*, see Rothstein E., "‘Ideal Presence’ and the ‘Non Finito’ in Eighteenth-Century Aesthetics", *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 9 (1976) 307–332. For an excellent discussion of origins of the *non finito* in Britain, see Guentner W.A., "British Aesthetic Discourse, 1780–1830: The Sketch, the Non Finito, and Imagination", *Art Journal* 52 (1993) 40–47. Rothstein, "‘Ideal Presence’" 312–313, 330.

increasingly emphasized incompleteness over resolution in art. By these accounts this shift can be traced back to at least 1699, when the French art critic Roger de Piles opined that he favored looking at a rough drawing or unfinished sketch over that of a meticulously finished composition.¹⁴ Concerning the particular pleasures that might be derived from such a sketch, De Piles noted that 'the imagination supplies all the features which are missing or which have not been finished, and each person who sees the sketch fills them in according to his taste'.¹⁵ This concept propounded by de Piles marks the beginning of an eighteenth-century taste for the *non finito*, or what Bryson calls 'the cult of the image that is incomplete'.¹⁶ De Piles' approval of incompleteness would be reprised and developed in the written accounts of artistic pleasure by Sir Joshua Reynolds, Hildebrand Jacob and others, and affirmed in texts widely read and circulated in eighteenth-century artistic and intellectual circles.¹⁷ Historian Marcia Allentuck concluded that in the eighteenth century an intentionally unfinished work of art and the open quality of image making was 'recognized to be a particular form of expression in its own right, challenging and motivating its audience to creative cooperation'.¹⁸

In considering this new relationship between the beholder and the Baroque image in his book *Word and Image: French Painting of the Ancien Régime*, Bryson identifies a number of techniques and devices developed by eighteenth-century artists—among them pictorial ellipsis—to achieve what he terms a 'cultivated insufficiency' in their art.¹⁹ Bryson argues that an increasingly sophisticated eighteenth-century audience asked to attend to a work's inadequate signifiers likely would have appreciated the task 'for the challenge it presented to [their] imagination, and for making every perceiver into an

14 Bryson, *Word and Image* 102; and Rothstein, "Ideal Presence" 326. Rothstein notes that the concept of the non-finito in literature can also be found at this time in Joseph Addison's 1693 essay on Vergil's *Georgics*, in which Addison notes that the poetic image is wedded to a chain of actions that 'addresses itself wholly to the imagination'. See *ibid.* 323.

15 Bryson, *Word and Image* 102–03; Rothstein, "Ideal Presence" 326.

16 Bryson, *Word and Image* 102.

17 Rothstein, "Ideal Presence" 326. Other notable expressions of the artistic non-finito included Père Bouhours, who noted that 'great art consists [...] in leaving others to perceive more than one says'; and Père André, who claimed that 'there is a kind of beauty in expression which comes from saying only as much as will allow personnes d'esprit the pleasure of supplying the rest'. See *ibid.* 321.

18 Allentuck M., "In Defense of an Unfinished *Tristram Shandy*: Laurence Sterne and the *Non Finito*", in Cash A. – Stedmond J. (eds.), *The Winged Skull: Papers from the Laurence Sterne Bicentenary Conference* (London: 1971) 147.

19 Bryson, *Word and Image* 104–104.



FIGURE 23.4 Giambattista Tiepolo, "Asia" (1752–1753). Treppenhaus ceiling fresco, Würzburg, Germany. Detail, figure of Asia.

artist—a *personne d'esprit*.²⁰ It is this sense of the eighteenth-century beholder as an imaginative co-creator of the image that might allow us to account for Tiepolo's own use of polysemous and mutable forms in *Asia* and elsewhere and fully to appreciate how such imagery functions within the socio-political milieu of the Residenz's Treppenhaus—a discursive space, it is worth recalling, meant unambiguously to convey to the perceiving subject the preeminence of their host the Prince-Bishop.²¹

Let us briefly consider within this context of calculatedly insufficient forms Tiepolo's figure of Asia sitting atop her elephant, a personification that offers a number of formal ambiguities and compositional disjunctures for the competent eighteenth-century viewing subject to resolve. Perhaps the most obvious visual conundrum revolves around her left leg, which she appears to be missing [Fig. 23.4]. Perceptually, the beholder first assumes that the missing leg is simply concealed beneath the figure's blue robes or else on the other side

20 Ibid. 109.

21 See also Guentner, "British Aesthetic Discourse" 40–47; and Rothstein, "Ideal Presence" 307–332.

of the elephant. But Tiepolo's decision to show the figure foreshortened from below and sitting sidesaddle focuses the viewer's attention on the very site of ambiguity, and he draws the beholder's eye to the site of the unaccounted-for limb by arranging the folds of Asia's blue garment in such a way as to create a void at precisely that spot from which her leg ought to protrude. Further complicating the beholder's primary task of recognition is the fact that Tiepolo has rendered Asia's visible right leg in such a manner and at such an angle so as to incite the viewer momentarily to consider that it might in fact be the missing left appendage. The beholder finally must resolve that the absent limb is simply hidden from view, despite the conflicting signifiers that resist such a reading.

Determinate Forms and the Disruption of Visual Pleasure in Tiepolo's *Europe*

Through a calculated use of formal ambiguities and indeterminacy, Tiepolo has rendered many of his figures so rudimentarily that they merely suggest rather than directly transmit information until the beholder actively attends to them, that is, until the perceiver performs the most basic tasks of transforming the artist's inchoate forms into coherent meaning.²² But if *Asia's* elliptical imagery might be seen within the context of eighteenth-century aesthetic standards and artistic principles to empower the visitor to the Residenz—incited to imaginative participation through Tiepolo's use of mutable forms and semantic equivocation—Tiepolo engages the viewer of his *Europe* fresco in a fundamentally different way. It is in *Europe* that the force of the discursive image returns and the notion of the spectator's manipulation of the visual sign encountered shifts considerably.

Tiepolo's *Europe* fresco, which marks both the illusory destination of the other personified figures and the real terminus of the visitor's procession up the grand staircase, contains almost none of the purposefully ambiguous bodies and featureless figures that had to this point stimulated the viewer's imagination and constituted the visual pleasure associated with the *non finito* [Fig. 23.5]. In *Europe* clearly delineated and highly visible individuals stand in sharp contrast to their surroundings and one another, an effect achieved through Tiepolo's use of a varied and vivid color palette and his ordered

22 Bryson, *Word and Image* 105–107.



FIGURE 23.5 Giambattista Tiepolo, "Europe" (1752–1753). Treppenhause ceiling fresco, Würzburg, Germany.

arrangement of the figures within the pictorial space.²³ Where Tiepolo does occasionally include a partially obscured head or torso in the *Europe* fresco, such passages appear as natural, inevitable omissions and, as a result, appear as consistent with the logic of an unambiguous pictorial space and the relationship of fully resolved objects and figures to one another within that space.

The impression that *Europe* is inhabited by determinate, differentiated forms no longer requiring the viewer's interpretative contributions is further enhanced by Tiepolo's inclusion of several non-allegorical personages who would have been recognized by visitors to the Residenz, including the palace's chief architect Balthasar Neumann (seen reclining on a cannon on the cornice in the foreground), the court sculptor Antonio Bossi (who stands just to the right of Neumann and wrapped in a light-colored robe), Tiepolo and his son (seen in the extreme left corner of the fresco), and even a portrait of the

23 Tiepolo's use of color in *Europe* stands in contrast to his palette in the other sections of the four continents, which generally favors a more restricted palette of browns and reds. Absent also is Tiepolo's prior tendency to cluster figures into intertwining masses of largely undifferentiated bodies.



FIGURE 23.6 Giambattista Tiepolo, "Africa" (1752–1753). *Treppenhaus ceiling fresco, Würzburg, Germany. Detail, left section with merchants and smokers.*

Prince-Bishop himself. Such apparently autonomous and fully recognizable figures confront the beholder with a consummate viewing experience of a seemingly palpable reality.

In *Europe* the pleasurable and empowering task of coaxing recognizable forms from equivocal ones to generate decisive meaning is no longer required, as the overall sense of ambiguity and indeterminacy is here muted by clear referents, highly resolved passages and transparent signs. Indeed, the visual impact and force of *Europe* upon the spectator is precisely the degree to which its forms and figures seem emphatically legible and contemporary. In this, Tiepolo exerts control over the spectator by sharply prescribing the beholder's relationship to the forms in *Europe*, depicting recognizable figures that supply scant imaginative freedom for an eighteenth-century audience that would have been inclined toward the type of deliberately laconic imagery found in other areas of Tiepolo's ceiling fresco.²⁴ It is a sudden and dramatic reversal of the perceiving subject's pleasurable power as a collaborator in the production

24 On the expectations and inclinations of eighteenth-century audiences, see Rothstein, "Ideal Presence" 312–325.

of the visual sign, and it is a power shift evident also in the gazes of the figures depicted in *Europe*.

In previous sections of the ceiling fresco Tiepolo has with few exceptions painted his figures so that their eyes are either concealed from view or else their gaze is directed away from the beholder. Consider, for example, the gazes in the main figural grouping in the left section of the *Africa* fresco [Fig. 23.6]. The eyes of the merchant in the diamond-patterned robe are downcast and obscured in shadow, all but invisible to the beholder, while the shirtless figure moving bales nearby turns his face away from the viewer entirely. Just behind him the drooping brim of a turban conceals the eyes of the man holding a long-stemmed pipe (the brim's positioning a seeming contrivance for the sole purpose of concealing his gaze). Another recumbent figure smoking a pipe—whose very presence could easily be missed, he is rendered so indeterminately—is visible only from the upper torso down, his face carefully hidden behind the body of the merchant in the diamond-patterned robe. In an almost comical touch, Tiepolo has turned the head of camel standing nearby away from the viewer, concealing even the pack animal's eyes.²⁵

On Bryson's account, an artist's handling of the figural gaze either to affirm or deny the primacy of the beholder's own is a key determinant in the relationship between the image and beholder in the eighteenth century. As Bryson sees it, Baroque painters carefully calibrated the gazes within their pictures, since a figure within the painting looking directly out from the picture plane could compromise the beholder's experience by directly addressing the spectator, dispelling the illusion of his masterful jurisdiction.²⁶ Even a gaze shared between two figures—what Bryson terms a 'competent gaze'—risks unsettling the primacy of the beholder's gaze by marking an internal narrative functioning independently of the beholder's imaginative conceptual and perceptual projections.²⁷

Not surprisingly, then, on the rare occasion in *America*, *Asia* or *Africa* where the eyes of a figure are clearly visible, their gaze is non-confrontational and unmotivated, rarely directed at anyone or anything in particular. Addressing no one, unmotivated looks such as these are considered by Bryson to signal a concession to the beholder precisely because they neither rival nor challenge his own gaze, thereby affording him imaginative freedom and control. There

25 Among the figures in this grouping in *Asia*, only the eyes of the turbaned merchant in the blue robe are clearly visible, but even his look amounts to at best a shallow transgression beyond the picture plane.

26 Bryson, *Word and Image* 90.

27 Ibid. 90–93.

is on the whole a decided lack of interpersonal interaction in these passages of the fresco, and when one figure does look at another, their gaze is seldom acknowledged or returned.²⁸ And in those rare instances when a narrative meaning can be attributed to a glance, it is often because it is a look towards *Europe* and thus functioning as simply directional and rhetorical reinforcement of the visitor's own progression through the Treppenhaus space.

When the visitor finally beholds *Europe*, however, their relationship to the image shifts emphatically as they approach their destination at the top of the stairs. If until this moment the array of downcast eyes, averted glances and turned away heads could be said to preserve and to affirm the gaze of the visitor within the Treppenhaus, in *Europe* Tiepolo's handling of the figural gaze is altogether different [Fig. 23.7]. Indeed, throughout Tiepolo's decisive fresco numerous figures turn towards the spectator and gaze directly out from the picture plane into the great hall—from such notable figures as Neumann and Bossi to lowly court pages and attendants. Bossi's gaze is particularly audacious, as the sculptor stares out towards the viewer as if in direct response to the visitor's presence on the staircase—an unabashed look reinforced by the disposition of his pivoting body and knowing hand gesture. Tiepolo himself appears with his son in the lower left corner of the scene, both of them peering out from their perch below the Würzburg dome in the left corner of the scene. That this challenge to the beholder's gaze is elevated to something of the level of a leitmotif seems assured by the fact that even the animals in *Europe*—the chestnut horse and large bull upon which a personified Europe rests—look directly out from the pictorial space towards the visitor, reversing the power dynamic between image and spectator and bringing an emphatic end to the sense of creative control and visual mastery hitherto afforded the viewer.

One final transformation in the beholder's relationship to Tiepolo's imagery is heralded by a general shift in the spatial construction of the virtual space and the figures in it. In *Asia*, *Africa* and *America*, figures occupy a shallow foreground space and are presented in planar, frieze-like arrangements with few visual cues to suggest perspectival depth or the recessionary movement of figures. In these three frescos the absence of clear horizon lines and significant architectonic forms that might firmly locate figures in a defined pictorial space disrupts any clear sense of the virtual space. When the occasional structural element is present—the obelisk in *Asia* or the tree in *America*, for instance—it

28 Alpers and Baxandall note this lack of interaction, observing the odd sense of detachment between the various figures. See Alpers – Baxandall, *Tiepolo and the Pictorial Intelligence* 161.



FIGURE 23.7 *Giambattista Tiepolo, "Europe" (1752–1753). Treppenhaus ceiling fresco, Würzburg, Germany. Detail, left section.*

is not articulated logically into the space nor rendered according to the established codes of perspective, thereby undermining rather than synchronizing spatial relationships and a unifying sense of virtual depth.²⁹ Tiepolo's ambiguous rendering of pictorial space conforms to what Bryson considered to be a broad Baroque commitment to an elimination of coherent and legible space. For Bryson, a coherent illusionistic representation of space stifles the imaginative involvement of the viewer whereas the Baroque ambiguation of pictorial space serves as a calculated concession to the visual pleasure of the eighteenth-century viewer: 'The destruction of [coherent] space [...] is a function of an overall strategy of removal of information which does not harmonize with the aim of [the beholder's] erotic or sensual contemplation'.³⁰

When considered in these terms, *Europe's* highly resolved space once again offers a stark contrast to Tiepolo's other three continental frescos. It is after all with *Europe* that the spectator is for the first time confronted with clear architectural references and a coherent and palpable pictorial space. Unlike Tiepolo's frieze-like arrangement of figures in the other frescos, wherein the processions of the personified continents and their retinues unfold within ambiguous pictorial spaces and laterally along a shallow plane atop the cornice, in *Europe* the artist produces a strong illusion of three-dimensional space. Tiepolo achieves this visual effect through the use of clear spatial coordinates reinforced by anchoring perspectival lines and the inclusion of substantial architectural elements, most notably the imposing façade of a monumental temple with a broken pediment. It is worth noting that the lone extant *modello* of the Treppenhaus frescos shows the personification of Europe on her throne with a miniature temple functioning as an armrest, an emblem of Religion often associated with the figure of Europe. In the final version, Tiepolo has transposed the pedimented temple into a large structure articulated across much of *Europe's* background, while transferring the emblems of Religion to two young boys within the scene, who between them hold a miter, cross and a bishop's crosier. Tiepolo has thus relieved the temple of its exclusively

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- 29 Indeed, the shallow frieze-like presentation of the figures in *Asia*, *Africa* and *America* seems instead to be a concession to the beholder, as the picture-plane becomes a site of fantasy where bodies are put on display for the visitor, their planar arrangement merely a pretext for the visual consumption of their forms.
- 30 Bryson, *Word and Image* 96. For Bryson, cohesive space does not conform to eighteenth-century rococo painting's objective of emphasizing the signifier over the signified. 'Even when rococo painting risks an external location', Bryson notes, 'marks of spatial alterity are sedulously erased: there must be no horizon, and no vanishing point: recession in depth is exchanged for the planarity of backdrop'.

iconographic function and, in so doing, recast it as a palpable architectural presence and into a pictorial sign for the real.

This illusion of the real in the *Europe* fresco is further reinforced by Tiepolo's representation of such real architectural elements and structures as the domed roof of the Würzburg Residenz—one of several clearly recognizable references that conspire to create the illusion of a familiar and coherent pictorial space.³¹ Tiepolo even represented the wooden platforms upon which he and his assistants would have stood while frescoing the very ceiling being viewed, the *trompe l'oeil* scaffold and its plunging perspective furthering the sense of illusionistic space and adding to the sense that *Europe* is based on the empirical coordinates of a decidedly contemporary time and place. Limiting the viewer's pleasurable participation in much the same way that its more resolved figures would, *Europe* forecloses the equivocal effect found in Tiepolo's other frescos, wherein space was suggested rather than fully articulated. In *Europe*, unified representational space and a locally delimited set of references threatens the viewer's imaginative and interpretative license in the completion of the scene.³²

Conclusion: From Indeterminacy to Discursivity

Let us close where we opened, considering Tiepolo's crowning artistic achievement within the ideological and discursive conditions in which it existed. The ascent up the Residenz's grand staircase by a beholder on the move can in many ways be considered a journey from one polarity to another, a journey comprising a slow pendulum swing between the emancipatory effect of indeterminacy and the controlling grasp of discursivity. On the one hand, Tiepolo carefully calibrates the viewing experience for an eighteenth-century audience inclined to consider their viewing pleasure as predicated on the imaginative freedom and interpretative labor afforded by his personifications in particular and his visual images in general. On the other hand, Tiepolo restores to an otherwise abstract process of decoding symbolic imagery the sociopolitical instruction through the reassertion of the discursive schema and the rhetorical function of personification.

31 Alpers – Baxandall, *Tiepolo and the Pictorial Intelligence* 47–48. For a discussion of the transposition of the temple, see *ibid.* 154.

32 I am thinking here specifically of the moment when Bryson observes that, 'all signs that the body has other purposes, another history, are to be suppressed; it cannot even have a setting of its own'. See Bryson, *Word and Image* 92.

By strategically manipulating the general values and effects of what had become known to eighteenth-century cognoscenti as the *non finito* and thus the viewer's sense of imaginative, pleasurable control over the interpretative act, Tiepolo can be seen to offer new ways of thinking about personification—about the value of legibility and its relation to power, about its integration into ideological and social structures, and about how it can productively operate on the beholder within and against an orderly and conventional semantic system of meaning. Through such a model of beholder interaction, the significance of *Allegory of the Planets and Continents* extends beyond the established limits of iconographic traditions and codified meanings and turns instead on Tiepolo's manipulation of the discursive power of personification itself—its economy and its signifying force as a locus of information—to communicate the Prince-Bishop's supremacy.

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PART 9

The Four Continents: Sources and Sentiments



The Personification of Africa with an Elephant-Head Crest in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (1603)

Joaneath Spicer

The personification “Africa” as one of the Four Parts of the World [Fig. 24.1], featuring an elephant-head crest as described and illustrated in Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (Rome: 1603 edition), codified a strand of humanist scholarly interpretation that had evolved over the preceding century. This present examination grows out of my research on the lives of peoples of African ancestry in Europe, including the impact of a related form of assigned image, the stereotype.¹ Previous scholarship has generated important insights on aspects of this narrative, but taking Ripa's configuration as a departure point highlights new material.² The discussion initially follows the reasoning and Roman sources adduced by Ripa's predecessors, but the narrative is not complete without a consideration of the earlier Greek and North African sources with which they were unfamiliar and which lend a different nuance to the Roman ones which they did know. This prompts questions as to how attributes come into being and what qualities contribute to the memorability of the association of the image or attribute with the underlying idea, turning the personification into a mnemonic device.

Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia* (ed. princeps, 1593; first illustrated edition, Rome 1603; expanded and revised editions in 1613 and 1618 before the author's death in 1622) was the most influential handbook of symbolic imagery of the early

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- 1 Spicer J. (ed.), *Revealing the African Presence in Renaissance Europe* [exh. cat., Walters Art Museum, Baltimore] (Baltimore: 2012).
 - 2 Publications consulted with great benefit on this specific motif: McGrath E., “Humanism, Allegorical Invention, and the Personification of the Continents”, in Vlieghe H. – Balis A. – Van de Velde C. (eds.), *Concept, Design & Execution in Flemish Painting 1550–1700* (Turnhout: 2000) 43–71; Köllmann J., “Erdeile”, *Reallexikon zur Deutsche Kunstgeschichte* (Stuttgart: 1967) vol. v, cols. 1107–1202; Toynbee J.M.C., *The Hadrianic School: A Chapter in the History of Greek Art* (Rome: 1967); Le Glay M., “Africa”, *Lexikon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (Zurich: 1981–) vol. 1, 250–255; Maritz J.A., “From Pompey to Plymouth: The Personification of Africa in the Art of Europe”, *Scholia* 11 (2002) 65–79; Dahmen K., *The Legend of Alexander the Great on Greek and Roman Coins* (London: 2007); and Bonoldi L., “Exuviae Alexandri. Slittamenti del significato allegorico della spoglia elefantina”, *Saggi, La Revista di Engramma* 44 (2005) http://www.egramma.it/engramma_v4/rivista/saggio/44/044_exuviaealephantis.html. Scholars generally are best on Renaissance art *or* Roman art and coinage *or* Greek coinage.



FIGURE 24.1 Anonymous after Giovanni Guerra (attrib.), "Africa." In Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia* (Rome, Lepido Faiej: 1603) 337. Los Angeles, The Getty Research Institute.

modern period.³ It is an astonishing feat that Ripa, then the meat carver and butler in the household of Cardinal Anton Maria Salviati in Rome, compiled the work in his 'leisure time'. Organized alphabetically as a lexicon of concepts visualized as personifications, Ripa's handbook codified the most striking, easily understood of the attributes and interpretations proposed over the previous century and, in turn, provided an immensely popular, predigested model in the vernacular for a wider range of users for over two centuries, available in multiple editions and languages. The *Iconologia's* full title (1603), translated from the Italian, lays out the author's goals, method, and audience:

Iconologia, that is the description of diverse images ['imagini'] quarried from antiquity and of my own invention, found and presented by Cesare Ripa of Perugia, knight of Saints Maurice and Lazarus. Newly revised and amplified with more than 400 images, and now embellished with illustrations. A work useful no less than necessary to poets, painters, sculptors, and others, in order to represent virtue, the vices, the emotions, and the human passions.⁴

Africa, One of the Amplifications Added to the 1603 Edition

The 'image' (personification) of Africa is one of the amplifications (not in the 1593 edition) and one of those 'quarried' chiefly from antiquity, the entry

3 Relevant scholarship on Ripa for the present study: Werner G., *Ripa's 'Iconologia': Quellen – Methode – Ziele* (Utrecht: 1977); Maffei S., *Le radici antiche dei simboli. Studi sull' "Iconologia" di Cesare Ripa e i suoi rapporti con l'antico* (Naples: 2009); Callegari M., "Cesare Ripa, his *Iconologia* and the Numismatic", in Deksel C. – Stäcker T. (eds.), *Europäische numismatische Literatur im 17. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: 2005) 101–107; Cherchi G., "Tra animato e inanimato: gli animali in Cesare Ripa", in Gabriele M. – Galassi C. – Guerini R. (eds.), *L'Iconologia di Cesare Ripa. Fonti letterarie e figurative dall'Antichità al Rinascimento* (Florence: 2013) 83–96 (nothing on the elephant scalp); and Pierguidi S., "Giovanni Guerra and the Illustrations to Ripa's *Iconologia*", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 61 (1998) 158–175, in which it is convincingly argued that the publisher initiated the commission for the illustrations and Guerra was responsible for at least some of the models. No drawing for "Africa" is known. Scholarship on Ripa rarely addresses the Parts of the World.

4 *Iconologia overo Descrittione di diverse Imagini cavate dall'antichità, & di propria invention, trovate & dichiarate da Cesare Ripa Perugino, Cavaliere de Santi Mauritio, & Lazaro. Di nuovo rivista, & del medesimo ampliata di 400 & più imagini, Et di figure d intaglio adornata. Opera non meno utile che necessaria a Poeti, Pittori, Scultori, & altri, per rappresentare le Virtù, Vitij, Affetti, & Passioni humane* (Roma, appresso Lepido Faeij: 1603).

making reference to Roman authors, Roman coins in private collections or published in recent numismatic studies, as well as a sixteenth-century anthropologist (incorrectly). The four parts of the known world are alphabetized under World (*Mondo*). Appended to the 1603 text below is a final paragraph added in the 1613 edition. My completions to Ripa's references are in the notes:

Africa / A Moorish woman, almost nude, who has tightly curled untidy hair ['capelli crespi e sparsi'], supporting on the head like a crest a head of an elephant, at her neck a string of corral and at the ears, pendants, with the right hand holding a scorpion and with the left a cornucopia full of ears of grains; on one side next to her is an extremely fierce lion and on the other are some vipers and venomous snakes.

Africa, one of the four parts of the world, is called Africa, either by reference to *aprica* [wide open to the sun], deprived of cold and the sun's darling, or is named after Afro, one of the descendants of Abraham, as Josephus says.⁵

Africa is represented as a moor because Africa is mostly in the Torrid Zone, whence Africans come to be naturally brown and moors.

She is nude because there is not an abundance of riches in this country.

The head of an elephant is included, because this detail is found on the medal of the Emperor Hadrian [Fig. 24.2],⁶ these animals being proper to Africa, used by these people in war not just as a marvel but first of all to scare the Romans, their enemies.

The black, tightly curled hair, corals at the neck and ears, are ornaments proper to moors.

The ferocious lion, the scorpion, and the other venomous serpents demonstrate that the many animals that come from Africa are not only of great variety but are infinitely venomous, as Claudian writes to the same purpose,⁷

Mauretania has given ere now her animals to other consuls as a gift; to this consul alone she owes them as a conquered land owes tribute.

5 Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* (in Greek, c. 94 CE) Bk. I, ch. 15.

6 Mattingly H. – Sutherland C.H.V. – Carson R.A.G. (eds.), *The Roman Imperial Coinage* (London: 1986) 2.299 (type); and Toynbee, *Hadrian* 33–35.

7 Claudian, *De Consulatu Stilichonis* (c. 403–404) vol. III, 278, further cited by Erizzo Sebastiano, *Discorso de M. Sebastiano Erizzo sopra le Medaglie de gli Antichi* (Venice, Giovanni Varisco and Pagagnino Paganini: 1571) 350.



FIGURE 24.2 Roman Mint, Roman Aureus with Portrait of Hadrian (obverse) and Africa (reverse) (134–138 CE). Gold, 7.32 grammes. London, British Museum.
IMAGE © TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

The cornucopia full of ears of grain signifies the abundance and cereal fertility of Africa, for which we have Horace as an authority.⁸

Whatsoever is culled from Libya's threshing floors.

Johann Boehme also, who knows about the costumes, laws, & customs of all nations, says in his description that Africans reap the grain twice a year, having twice the summer time.⁹ And Ovid, in Book Four of the *Metamorphoses*,¹⁰ writes:

The victor hovered in the air over the Libyan sands,
where the Gorgon-head dropped clots of gore, that,
quicken on the ground, became unnumbered serpents;
fitting cause to curse with vipers that infested land.¹¹

8 Horace, *Carmina* (Odes, 23 BCE) Bk. 1.1.

9 Boemus Joannes, *De Omnium Gentium Ritibus* (*The Customs of All peoples*; Augsburg, S. Grim: 1520); edition Ripa probably consulted: *I costumi, le leggi, et l'usanze de tutte le genti* (Venice, Dominico, & Aluise Giglio: 1565). However, Boehme's reference to a locale with two summers and two harvests per year is to India (Part II "Asia", chapter 8, "India", based on Pliny, *Natural History* (77–79 CE) Bk. 6, ch. 21, "The Lands of India") and not to Africa, although he notes the great fertility of Egypt in "Africa", chapters 3 and 5.

10 Ovid, *Metamorphoseon libri* (*Metamorphoses*, 8 CE), Bk. IV, ll. 617–620.

11 Ripa, *Iconologia* (1603) 335–337: 'AFRICA/ Una donna mora quasi nuda, haverà li capelli crespi e sparsi, tenendo in capo come per cimiero una testa di elefante, al collo un filo di coralli & di essi a l'orecchie due pendenti, con la destra mano tenga un scorpione, & con la sinistra un cornucopia pien di spighe di grano; da un lato appresso di lei vi sarà vn ferocissimo leone & da l'altro vi saranno alcune vipere, & serpenti venenosi.

Africa, una delle quattro parti del Mondo è detta Africa, quasi aprica, cioè vaga del Sole, perche è priva del freddo, overo è detta da Afro, uno de discendenti d'Abraham, come dice Giosefo.

Si rappresenta mora, essendo l'Africa sottoposta al mezo dì, & parte di essa anco alla zona torrida; onde gli Africani vengono ad essere naturalmente bruni, & mori.

Si fa nuda, perche non abonda molto di ricchezze questo paese.

La testa dell'elefante si pone, perche così sta fatta nella Medaglia de l'Imperadore Adriano, essendo questi animali proprij de l'Africa, quali menati da quei popoli in guerra, diedero non solo merauiglia: ma da principio spauento à Romani loro nemici.

Li capelli neri, crespi, coralli al collo, & orecchie, sono ornamenti loro proprij moreschi.

Il ferocissimo leone, il scorpione, & gli altri venenosi serpenti dimostrano che ne l'Africa di tali animali ve n'è molta copia, & sono infinitamente venenosi, onde sopra di ciò così disse Claudiano.

Namque feras alijs tellus maurusia donum. Praebuit, huic, soli debet ceu victa tributum.

Il cornucopia pieno di spighe di grano denota l'abondanza, & fertilità frumentaria dell'Africa, della quale ci fa fede Horatio.

Quicquid de Libycis verritur areis.

Added in the 1613 edition:

Africa. A woman who with the right [hand] holds a lion tied with a rope, as on a medal of [Septimus] Servus, described by Occo as from the founding of Rome 948 and 960.¹² On a Medal of Hadrian [she] holds a scorpion in the right hand, is seated on the ground, and [holds] in the left a cornucopia [Fig. 24.2].¹³ Africa with an elephant's trunk on the head is to be seen in the [publication] of Fulvio Orsini on the families Cestia, Eppia, Norbana,¹⁴ and on a medal of Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius [Fig. 24.3].¹⁵

Et Gio. Boemo anch' egli nella descrittione; che fa de' costumi, leggi, & vsanze di tutte le genti, dice che due volte l'anno gl' Africani mietono le biade, hauendo medèsimamente due volte nell'anno l'estate.

Et Ouidio nel quarto delle Metamorfosi anch' egli.

Cumque super Libycas victor penderet arenas.

Gorgonei capitis guttae cecidere crunctae.

Quas humus excerptas varios animauit in angues;

Vnde frequens illa est, infestaque terra colubris.'

- 12 The coin of Emperor Septimius Severus was probably a silver denarius, Rome mint, 207 CE, Mattingly, *Roman Imperial Coinage* 4.207 (type). Occo Adolfo, *Impp. Romanorum Nvmismata* (Roman Imperial Coinage; Antwerp, Christophe Plantin: 1579 [1601 edition consulted]) 349. For Occo, see Cunnally J., *Images of the Illustrious: The Numismatic Presence in the Renaissance* (Princeton: 1999) 131, 202–203.
- 13 For the aureus of Hadrian, see note 6.
- 14 Orsini Fulvio, *Familiae romanae quae reperiuntur in antiquis numismatibus [...]* (*Roman Families Represented in Ancient Coinage [...]*) (Rome, Francisci Tramezini: 1577) 38, 76, 92. For Orsini, see Cunnally, *The Numismatic Presence* 203–204. Marcus Eppius Legatus, L. Cestius, and C. Norbanus were mid first-century Roman moneyers, mint officials who decided on the design of coinage. The referenced coins were surely the aureus with the head of Africa issued 43 BCE by L. Cestius and C. Norbanus, as Crawford M.H. – Ghey E. – Leins I. (eds.), *A Catalogue of the Roman Republican Coins in the British Museum, with descriptions and chronology based on M.H. Crawford, Roman Republican Coinage* (1974) (London: 2010) 491/1a (coin type) and the denarius (not a medal) issued under the auspices the moneyer Eppius Legatus 47–46 BCE [Fig. 24.3], by a military mint traveling in the province Africa on behalf of the Roman general Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio Nasica (referenced as Metellus Scipio, c. 100–46 BCE), Crawford, *Roman Republican Coins* 461.1.2 (type).
- 15 Ripa Cesare, *Iconologia di Cesare Ripa Perugino Cav.re de' S.ti Mauritio e Lazzaro, nella quale si descrivono Diverse Imagini di Virtù, Vitij, Affetti, & Passioni humane, Arti, Discipline, Humori, Elementi, Corpi Celesti, Provincie d'Italia, Fiume, tutte le parti del Mondo, ed altre infinite materie. Opera utile ad Oratori, Predicatori, Poeti, Pittori, Scultori Disegnatori, e ad ogni studioso per Inventar Concetti, Emblemi, ed Imprese, per divisare qualsivoglia apparato nuttiale, funerale, trionfale. Per rappresentar poemi drammatici, e per figurare co' suoi propij*

Roman Coins as the Most Important Source for Africa's Attributes

Africa's attributes are either commonplace qualities that characterize the inhabitants of this part of the world by typifying them, as found in travel reports and the nascent field of anthropology, in which Ripa had limited interest, or qualities that represent the encompassing idea of a part of the world through associations (as with the elephant head crest) validated by the significance assigned them in antiquity—to which he devoted great attention. Since the goal was to create a code intelligible to the initiated elite, it is hardly surprising that Ripa privileges attributes validated by the elite's shared intellectual history.

The reverses of Roman coins are the most important source that Ripa cites for Africa's attributes, with prominence given to coins minted in Rome under Emperor Hadrian following his visit in 128 CE to the province of Africa and helpfully inscribed 'AFRICA', thus establishing a reference point for comparable motifs on coins lacking descriptive identification. Familiarity with Roman coin reverses, often achieved indirectly, through antiquarian literature of the second half of the 1500s, was critical for composers of personifications. Collecting Roman coins, especially imperial coinage, was certainly not a new pursuit, but it was only in the 1500s that this study achieved a scholarly footing. Their appeal had traditionally resided first of all in their role as documented portraits of the emperors, but by the mid-1500s, in the wake of the growing humanist preoccupation with developing an image-based symbolic language prompted by the fascination with Egyptian hieroglyphics, studies incorporating references to personifications on the reverses of Roman coins became more common, as in Pierio Valeriano's influential *Hieroglyphica* (1556), to which we will return. In addition, a new type of publication focused on the coins and medals themselves (often and erroneously assumed to be primarily celebratory medals rather than primarily currency), initially simply describing or illustrating them and subsequently by explicating individual pieces, for example,

simboli ciò, che può cadere in pensiero humano. Ampliata ultimamente dallo stesso autore di .CC. imagini, e arricchita de molti discorsi pieni di varia eruditione, con nuovi intagli, e con Indici copiosi nel fine (Siena, Heirs of Matteo Florimi: 1613) 67: 'AFRICA. Donna che con la sinistra tiene un leone legato con una funne, medaglia di Seuero descritta da Occone ab Vrbe condita. 948. & 960. In medaglia di Adriano tiene vno scorpione nella destra, assisa in terra, nella sinistra vn cornucopia. L'Africa con la proboscide in testa di elefante vedasi in Fuluio Orsini nella gent Cestia, Eppia, Norbana, e nella medaglia de Q. Cecilio Metello Pio'.

one of Ripa's sources, Sebastiano Erizzo's *Discorso sopra le medaglie antiche, con la particular dichiarazione di molti reversi* (*Discourse on ancient medals with a particular attention to the many reverses*, ed. princeps, 1559, revised 1571).¹⁶ By the 1590s, more ambitious publications appeared, including another of Ripa's sources, Antonio Agostini's *Discorsi sopra le medaglia* (1592),¹⁷ in chapter three of which, dedicated to reverses representing "Provinces, Cities and Rivers", are individually titled paragraphs on the provinces of Africa, Mauretania, and Egypt, along with the city of Alexandria and the river Nile. This seems to be the only scholarly text pulling together attributes of the personification Africa before Ripa. Given the amount of material Ripa processed, he can be forgiven for ignoring the distinction between Africa, the Roman province (approximately the northern part of modern-day Tunisia and Algeria, including Carthage, established in 146 BCE following the final defeat of Carthage ending the Third Punic War, and apparently named for the Afri people who lived in the region), and Africa, one of the parts of the world, an appellation that came into use subsequent to the creation of the Roman province. For example, while Herodotus (420s BCE) had called the third part of the world Libya, by the first century BCE Sallust (86–35 BCE) refers to it as Africa.¹⁸

The Shifting History of Africa's Elephant Headdress Attribute in the Renaissance

Turning to case studies demonstrating the shifting history of the elephant headdress in the Renaissance, I take as an initial platform the date 1517 and the publication of *Hori Apollinis Niliaci Hieroglyphica, hoc est, De sacris Aegyptiorū literis libelli duo*. (*The Hieroglyphica of Horapollo, that is, The Sacred Letters of the Egyptians*; ed. princeps, 1517),¹⁹ translated from the Greek, a single manuscript copy having been identified in 1419. This is not the place to explore the impact of this discovery, but presented as a lexicon of individual Egyptian hieroglyphic

16 See note 7.

17 Agostini Antonio, *Discorsi sopra le medaglia* (Rome, Ascanio et Girolamo Donangeli: 1592) 48–49. On Agostini, see Cunnally, *Numismatic Presence* 186–187 with earlier literature; Maffei, *Radici* 164–180, 482–483; and Stenhouse W. "Antonio Agustin and the Numismatists", in Stahl A. (ed.), *The Rebirth of Antiquity: Numismatics, Archeology, and Classical Studies in the Culture of the Renaissance* (Princeton: 2009) 48–65.

18 *Bellum Jurgurthinum* (*The Jurgurthian War*), ch. xvii.

19 *Hori Apollinis Niliaci Hieroglyphica, hoc est De sacris Aegyptiorū literis libelli duo*. (*The Hieroglyphica of Horapollo, that is The Sacred Letters of the Egyptians*; Bologna, ed. princeps, 1517).

motifs and explanations of what was understood as a secret priestly language, composed by a fifth-century Egyptian priest, it is important not only for its content, now recognized as not the complete fantasy it was once thought,²⁰ but for the groundswell of humanist activity it prompted. This activity involved the further explication of Egyptian hieroglyphs, initially only among those who read Greek and then, after 1517, among an enlarged humanist audience. The elephant headdress does not appear in pre-Hellenic Egyptian art and is not in Horapollon's *Hieroglyphica*; however, it played a role both in projects to expand Horapollon's vocabulary of symbolic motifs and the application of such systems to iconographic programs intended for the decipherment and enjoyment of an initiated elite. Over the next century, the reverses of Roman coins, certifiably 'ancient' and often imprinted with an identified personification accompanied by symbolic attributes, would be a favored authority.

Of the complex, humanist-inspired, iconographic projects that followed, one carried out in 1518–1519 by the young Antonio Allegri da Correggio relies for a significant detail on the same Hadrianic reverse [Fig. 24.2] cited by Ripa. The reverse was the model for a preparatory study in red chalk [Fig. 24.4] for the personification of Africa, within the decoration of the private apartments of the abess of the Camera de San Paolo, a convent in Parma.²¹ The scorpion and cornucopia are clearly understood, but the elephant trunk, difficult to interpret as such given the minute scale of detail on the coin—if one had not studied coin reverses featuring the head alone—has been interpreted by Correggio as a serpent, suggesting that the unknown advisor might have read Claudian's comments on Africans who wear the heads of serpents as helmets.²² It also suggests a comparison with the Uraneus (stylized cobra symbolizing royal authority) on the Pharonic crown. Indeed in the finished painting the serpent has a mouth. This kind of misreading would be less likely after the advent of numismatic publications on coin reverses. The astrological program of the frescoes, as analyzed by modern scholars, is centered on the purification of the soul, with Africa embodying the poisonous element Earth from which the soul

20 See Leal P.G., *The Invention of Hieroglyphs: A Theory for the Transmission of Hieroglyphs in Early Modern Europe*, 2 vols. (PhD Thesis, University of Glasgow: 2014).

21 British Museum, inv. no. 1895-9-15-740, red chalk, 5.9 × 15.7 cm. See Giampaolo M. de – Muzzi P., *Correggio. I Disegni* (Turin: 1989) no. 9; Ekserdjian D., *Correggio* (New Haven: 1997) 88; and Chapman H., *Correggio and Parmigianino* [exh. cat., The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York] (New York: 2000–2001) no. 7, and n. 20.

22 Claudian, *De Consulatu Stilichonis* (c. 403–404) vol. 1, 263.



FIGURE 24.4 *Antonio Correggio, Studies for the Camera di San Paolo (c. 1519). Red chalk, 5.9 × 15.7 cm. London, British Museum.*
IMAGE © TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

must free itself.²³ The combination of scorpion and what was perceived to be a serpent headdress on the coin could have been interpreted as confirming the repeated reports of venomous snakes by Roman writers, as later cited by Ripa, rendering the equation of Africa and mortal poison understandable.

Perhaps the most important publication responding to Horapollus's *Hieroglyphica* was the *Hieroglyphica* (ed. princeps, 1556) of Piero Valeriano (1477–1560),²⁴ explicitly presented as an enlargement of the earlier work. It was in preparation by around 1520, per his later comments and as also evidenced by a little-studied sixteen-page manuscript of that period, *Elephas ex sacris Egyptiorum littoris et sculpturis* (*The Elephant in Egyptian Sacred Letters and Sculpture*) addressed to Don Miguel da Silva, the Portuguese ambassador to the Vatican.²⁵ While Valeriano introduces the reverses of several Roman coins, ones with the elephant headdress are not among them. By the time his *Hieroglyphica* appeared, Valeriano's knowledge of coin reverses had grown exponentially, and they are a critical source for this encyclopedia of motifs or 'hieroglyphs' from which readers could draw to create their own imagery.²⁶ There is no entry for Africa, but the index directs readers to titled paragraphs on the motifs' relevance for representations of Africa within the chapters on specific motifs, so that he can be said to enunciate the triad of characteristics, taken from the Hadrianic coin type, that will prove so influential: the elephant scalp as a trophy of Roman victories in Africa, the scorpion representing Africa's poisonous nature, and grain, her fertility.

23 On the interpretation, see most recently Frazzi M., *la camera alchemica / The alchemic camera* (Milan: 2004).

24 Consulted on Valeriano: Balavoine C., "Dès Hieroglyphica de Pierio Valeriano à l'Iconologia de Cesare Ripa, ou le changement de statut su signe iconique", in Barocchi P. – Bolzoni L. (eds.), *Repertori di parole e immagini. Esperienze cinquecentesche e moderni data bases* (Pisa: 1997) 49–49; and Curran B., "De Sacrarum litterarum Aegyptiorum interpretation': Reticence and Hubris in Hieroglyphic Studies of the Renaissance; Pierio Valeriano and Annius of Viterbo", *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 43–44 (1998–1999) 139–182.

25 Getty Institute Library, Philipps Collection, 86-A39, as c. 1520, unpaginated manuscript, sixteen pages. The only elephant reverse described is one identifiable as a denarius produced under Julius Caesar (Crawford 443/1) with an elephant with raised trunk trampling on a horned serpent. My thanks to David Brafman for obtaining a scan and to Chiara Valle for a review of the Latin. For Valeriano's comments c. 1522, see Curran, *Valeriano* 158.

26 *Valeriano Pierio, Hieroglyphicorum ex sacris Aegyptiorum literis libri octo* (Florence, Lorenzo Torrentino: ed. princeps 1556), "Elephantus", fol. 17v, "Scorpio", fol. 119v, and "Spica", fol. 404v.

Under “Spica” (“Grain”) the prodigious production of grain in the province of Africa represented by stalks of grain and allegorized by the cornucopia, is associated with the various combination of motifs attached to personifications of Africa on Hadrianic coins.²⁷ Valeriano introduces the quotation from Horace that Ripa later cites and poetically envisions Africa as a woman with stalks of grain in her hair. Although there is no reference here to Africa as a deity, that is how the goddess Africa appears in Claudian’s *De Bello Gildonico*.²⁸ In the index Valeriano cites the scorpion as the symbol of Africa,²⁹ but in the entry on this famously poisonous insect he is circumspect, citing Hadrianic coins with Africa holding a scorpion. More specifically its poisonous sting was for him, as Elizabeth McGrath has observed, a symbol of the ‘deceitful Carthaginians’.³⁰

Valeriano’s subsection on Africa under “Elephantus” evokes the elephant as a hieroglyph for Roman triumphs in north Africa, referring to coins of the generals Q.C. Marius (fought in Africa in 82–81 BCE), Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (Pompey the Great, successful African campaign in 81 BCE), and Scipio Imp., especially a silver coin of the latter showing a woman with an elephant scalp and wheat inscribed ‘Q. METELLUS’. This appears to be the earliest discussion of a reverse with the head alone. This Scipio has been assumed to be Scipio Africanus (Publius Cornelius Scipio, 236–183 BCE), the famous Roman commander who defeated the Carthaginians, thus ending the second Punic War (218–201 BCE).³¹ Publius Cornelius Scipio, subsequently with the added cognomen Africanus, was indeed famous in the Renaissance and associated with victories over forces fighting with elephants, but the coin cited, also by Ripa [Fig. 24.3], is that of another Scipio, Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio Nasica, a commander (‘imperator’) in Africa in 47–46 BCE, thus ‘SCIPIO IMP’.³² Agostini supposed that the elephant cap on Metellus’ coin honored the triumph of his forbearer the Roman consul L. Cecilius Metellus in the First Punic War in 250 BCE, who defeated the Carthaginian army under Hasdrupal.³³

Elephants, the largest land animal on earth, made as tremendous an impression on Renaissance writers and audiences as they had on the Romans.³⁴

27 Securing Rome’s supply of grain from the provinces of Egypt and Africa, both major producers, was an unending concern.

28 Claudian, *De Bello Gildonico* 135–136.

29 Valeriano, *Hieroglyphica*, Index unpaginated: ‘Affricae symbolum per scorpium’.

30 McGrath, “Continents” 54.

31 Ibid. 54.

32 See note 14.

33 Agostini, *Discoursi* 48–49.

34 Scullard H.H., *The Elephant in the Greek and Roman World* (Ithaca: 1974).



FIGURE 24.5 *Cornelis Cort after Giulio Romano, The Battle between Scipio and Hannibal at Zama (1567). Engraving, 41.9 × 53.7 cm. London, British Museum.*

IMAGE © TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

Elephants in early modern Europe were overwhelmingly Asian, but referred to as African, most famously Hanno, Pope Leo x's pet, named for a famous Carthaginian explorer.³⁵ Ripa's reference to elephants as used by 'these people in war not just as a marvel but first of all to scare the Romans, their enemies', would be understood as a reference to the Carthaginian general Hannibal, one of the great military tacticians in history. The reference would be understood both in terms of Hannibal's use of war elephants in Italy and in the often depicted battle of Zama in North Africa [Fig. 24.5], here in an engraving from a series after tapestry designs by Giulio Romano,³⁶ which brought the second Punic war to a close through the victory of Scipio Africanus. Readers

35 Bedini S.A., *The Pope's Elephant* (Manchester: 1997).

36 Sellink M., *The New Hollstein Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450–1700*, Cornelis Cort, 3 vols. (Rotterdam: 2000) vol. III, no. 196.11.

would also recall that for all Hannibal's audacity and ferociousness, he lost the battle and forfeited the independence of Carthage. In the representation of the battle, the war elephants are shown as huge, ferocious, smart, courageous but unpredictable, in many ways stand-ins for Hannibal himself. Emphasizing these qualities makes the victory of Scipio, the cool European, depicted in subsequent scenes, all the greater. The reference to elephants as deemed a marvel in antiquity was underscored by Agostini.³⁷

Possibly the first visual record of a sixteenth-century allegorical use of the elephant head cap or crest combined with an authoritative explanation (undiscussed in the literature) is the drawing *Sons of Atlas (Atlantidi)* [Fig. 24.6], attributed to Alessandro Allori (within the workshop of Giorgio Vasari), from two volumes of costume studies for the masque performed in Florence on 21 February 1566.³⁸ The masque was composed by Baccio Baldini, Archduke Cosimo de' Medici's erudite personal physician, who also published an extensive description.³⁹ It was based on Giovanni Boccaccio's *Genealogia deorum gentilium* (*Genealogy of the Pagan Gods*), completed in 1374. The masque was the last of numerous exquisitely elaborate performances honoring the marriage of Cosimo's son Francesco de' Medici and Joanna of Austria (daughter of Emperor Ferdinand I), beginning with a grand entry on 16 December 1565, devised by the Florentine humanist and Benedictine monk Vincenzo Borghini and carried out by Vasari.⁴⁰ Boccaccio cites three titans

37 Agostini, *Discorsi* 49.

38 There are three collections of related drawings; the most important is one of original studies in the Biblioteca Nazionale, Florence (ms. C.B.III.53), which includes the drawing under discussion as f. 16: lead pencil (?), brown wash, notations in chalk and brown ink, 43.3 × 29.1 cm. For general commentary, see Seznec J., "La Mascarade des dieux à Florence en 1565", *Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'histoire* (1935) 224–243; Petrioli Tofani A.M. (ed.), *Mostra di disegni vasariani. Carri trionfali e costume per la genealogia degli dei 1565* (Florence: 1966); and Pierguidi S., "Baccio Baldini e la 'mascherata della genealogia degli dei'", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 70,3 (2007) 347–364. The parallel drawing of the *Atlantidi* in the volume of copies in the Museo degli Uffizi, Gabinetto dei disegni (inv. no. 2704F, 249) carries a small urn and a sprig of balsam. Pierguidi introduces the two versions (359, his figs. 13–14) as an example of alterations with no further discussion. I find no further literature on the *Atlantidi* (other than Spicer, *African Presence* 56). They came to my attention through the files of the *Image of the Black in Western Art*. Other Africans: Hyas (f. 10), Standing Moor (f. 20), Jarba (f. 48), Atlas (f. 8 [also f. 9 as a white man]).

39 Baldini, Baccio, *Discorso sopra la mascherata della genealogia dell'Iddei de Gentili* (Florence, Apresi i Giunti: 1565) 22.

40 The entry was described in contemporary publications: Mellini Domenico, *Descrizione Dell'entrata Della Sereniss. Reina Giouanna D'austria Et Dell'apparato, Fatto in Firenze Nella Venuta, & Per Le Felicissime Nozze Di S. Altezza Et Dell'illustrissimo, & Eccellentiss. S. Don*



FIGURE 24.6 *Alessandro Allori (attr.), Sons of Atlas. Lead pencil (?), brown wash, notations in chalk and brown ink, 43.3 × 29.1 cm. Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale.*

by the name of Atlas, one of them 'a Moor, namely the one who migrated to Mauretania', with the further indication that, according to Pliny, his mother was Libya.⁴¹ Including black Africans added to the novelty of the festivities; however, a notation on the drawing specifies a 'black veil' ('velo nero'), so in the performance these Africans, as they are obviously drawn, would be played by white members or retainers of the court, the black veil being a theatrical device of the time for introducing Africans, without actually involving low status court employees or slaves of African ancestry.⁴²

Allori's drawing details the elephant headdress, shown also from the side, but Baldini's description and explanation in his *Discorso sopra la mascherata della genealogia dell'Iddei de Gentili* (1565) sets out the role of the Atlantidi and their attributes. As offspring of a titan, Atlas ('Atlante'), the Atlantidi follow the second car of The Heavens:

After Prometheus come two Atlantidi because they were the first to worship the sky who was their king, according to Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica*, Book Two.⁴³ The Author has attired them in the Moorish fashion with a cap dressed with the head of an elephant to demonstrate where they are from and to show the religion of the place,⁴⁴ because the elephant alone of all the irrational animals is religious and worships the sun and the moon, as Pliny says in Book Eight of the Natural History.⁴⁵ To demonstrate more clearly the religiosity of the Atlantidi, they have in

Francesco De Medici, *Prencipe Di Fiorenza, & Di Siena* (Florence, i Giunti: 1566); and Cini Giovan Battista, "Descrizione dell' apparato fatto in Firenze per le nozze dell'illustrissimo ed eccellentissimo don Franco Medici", in Vasari Giorgio, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori et architettori* (Florence, I Giunti: 1568) vol. III.2, 881–979. See further Ginori Conti P., *L'apparato per le nozze di Francesco de' Medici e di Giovanna d'Austria* (Florence: 1936); Scorza R.A., "Vincenzo Borghini and *Invenzione*: The Florentine *Apparato* of 1565", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 44 (1961) 57–75; and Williams R., "Vasari and Vincenzo Borghini", in Cast D. (ed.), *The Ashgate Companion to Giorgio Vasari* (Burlington: 2014) 23–40. Mellini, *Descrizione* 20, describes the presentation of Fiesole, the first of the Tuscan towns (predecessor of Florence), established by Hyade, Atlas's eldest son.

41 Boccaccio, *Genealogy* Bk. 4, ch. 31.

42 For such theatrical conventions, see Jones J., *Othello's Countrymen: The African in English Renaissance Drama* (London: 1965) 120–125. For the context, see Spicer, "European Perceptions of Blackness as Reflected in the Visual Arts", in idem, *African Presence* 39–40.

43 Eusebius, *Evangelicae Praeparationis*, c. 310 CE, Bk. 1.6, writes that the Egyptians and the Phoenicians were the first to declare the sun and moon to be gods.

44 Cini, *Descrizione* 955, writes confusedly that these figures in Moorish costume wore 'a head of a religious elephant as a cap' ('testa de religioso elefante per capello').

45 Pliny, *Natural History* Bk. 8.1.

their hands a *simpolo* [a bowl for libations], a white napkin used for sacrifices, a *delabra* [a handaxe used by Roman priests for ritual sacrifices], and an *acerra* [small portable Roman altar], items that the ancients used for their sacrifices.⁴⁶

A subsequent figure in the masque, Epahus, son of Zeus and king of Egypt, is described as wearing the same 'cap dressed with the head of an elephant' (of a priest) because he founded temples in Egypt.⁴⁷ Both instances may derive from a further passage in Eusebius on the Egyptians' worship of animals or gods who have taken on the form of animals: 'In encounters with their enemies their leaders prepared images of the animals which they now honor, and wore these upon the head, and had this as a mark of their authority; and when they were victorious over their foes, they ascribed the cause to the animals whose images they wore, and deified them.'⁴⁸

This is a rare, serious effort to coordinate the motif of the elephant scalp headdress on the coins, to which no textual reference in antiquity has been identified, and an ancient literary source. That the children of Atlas are Mauritanian, not Egyptian, does not detract from the subtlety of this argument. It cannot be excluded that Baldini understood a characteristic of the relevant coin reverses for which there was as yet no published discussion: the head of Africa on coins minted in Africa were generally not there simply as the titular personification of a subject kingdom or province but as an honored deity [Figs. 24.3, 24.11, 24.14, & 24.16], an issue Agostini will broach (but back away from) two decades later and to which I will return. Given that Ripa borrowed so often from Baldini's *Discorso*, it is not clear why he ignored this explanation.⁴⁹

46 Baldini, *Mascherata* 22: 'Dopo Prometheo vennero duoi Atlantidi percioche da questi popoli fu primieramente adorato Cielo, & su lor'Re, si come scrive Eusebio disopra detto, nel secondo libro della preparatione Evangelica, & que sti vesti l'Autore alla moresca, & messe loro in capo per acconciatura una testa d'Elephante per uno, si per dimostrare in quell modo il paese, onde egli erano, nel quale gli Elephanti nascono, si ancora per mostrare la religion loro: percioche l'Elephante solo di tutti gli animali senza ragione, è religioso, & adora il Sole, & la Luna, si come riferisce Plinio nell'ottavo libro del'Historia naturale, & per dimostrare ancor meglio la religion' di questi Atlantidi, messe loro in mano il Simpullo, la Mappa, la Dolobra, & l'Acerra, cose le quali gli antichi usavano ne i lor' sacrificij'.

47 Baldini, *Mascherata* 39. No drawing of this costume is known.

48 Eusebius, *Evangelicae* Bk. 11, 16.

49 For these borrowings, see Balavoine, "Hieroglyphica" 62.

On the other hand, the headdress itself of Allori's *Sons of Atlas* had real impact, beginning with the crest worn by the personification of Africa in a *Study for an Overdoor Decoration for the Sala Regia in the Vatican* [Fig. 24.7] from the workshop of Taddeo Zuccaro.⁵⁰ In the Sala Regia, the papal audience chamber decorated with frescoes (1564–1565) celebrating the might of the popes (and secular monarchs under papal authority) in overcoming enemies of the Church,⁵¹ the overdoor figure of Africa looks down on a battle that is a recent replay of Scipio Africanus's defeat of Hannibal and Carthage: Emperor Charles V's 1535 conquest of Tunis, the Moorish city near the ruins of ancient Carthage. The sketch and two related ones are dated to 1564;⁵² here the crest worn by Africa is sufficiently similar to the Florentine one to suggest direct adaptation. Taddeo was in Florence in 1564 and in contact with Vasari; in addition they collaborated on the Sala Regia decoration. This is one of the earlier sketches; the fresco and the finished study that preceded it depict the headdress as reduced to a stubby trunk. While one of Taddeo's sketches was most likely adapted for the headdress illustrated in the 1603 edition of Ripa, the headdress featured in the finished fresco may have been the source for that in the 1618 edition.

The Parts of the World embodied as personifications was firmly established as a topos of the visual arts in 1570 by the influential title page [Fig. 24.8] designed by Abraham Ortelius for his unprecedented, instantly famous collection of maps of the world, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (ed. princeps, 1570). Embodying the organization of the maps as well as the parts of the world, attractive young women representing Asia, Africa and America are shown subordinate to sovereign Europe.⁵³ Williams established the origins of this figuration in personifications of parts of the world in earlier festival entertainments in Antwerp celebrating their Habsburg rulers, for example a festival of

50 The discrete inclusion of a scorpion reflects knowledge of the Hadrianic type. Harvard Art Museums, bequest of Meta and Paul J. Sachs, 1965.434, pen and brown ink with brown wash, traces of black chalk, 23.5 × 42.2 cm, for which see Gere J., *Taddeo Zuccaro: His Development Studied in his Drawings* (Chicago: 1969) under no. 108. There is also a version in the University of Michigan Museum of Art, 1966/1.93.

51 For the Sala Regia, see Davison B., "The Decoration of the Sala Regia under Pope Paul III", *The Art Bulletin* 58,3 (1976) 395–423; Herz A., "Vasari's 'Massacre' Series in the Sala Regia: The Political, Juristic, and Religious Background", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 49,1 (1986) 41–54.

52 The earliest known pen sketch for this figure is British Museum 1947.0412.154 verso, for which see Gere, *Zuccaro* no. 108. The finished study in the Yale University Art Gallery, 1961.61.32, is catalogued as Raffaellino da Reggio after Taddeo Zuccaro.

53 For the Four Parts of the World, Köllmann, "Erdeteile" remains valuable. For a focus on Africa McGrath, "Continents" (with earlier literature) remains the most insightful.



FIGURE 24.7 *Taddeo Zuccaro (studio), Design for an Overdoor Decoration. Pen and brown ink with brown wash, traces of black chalk, 23.5 × 42.2 cm. Harvard Art Museum/Fogg Museum, Bequest of Meta and Paul J. Sachs. Photo: Imaging Department.*
IMAGE © PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS OF HARVARD COLLEGE.



FIGURE 24.8 Abraham Ortelius, Title page of *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Antwerp, [H. Goltzius]: 1570 [1592 edition]). Engraving with added wash, 41.1 × 26.7 cm. Baltimore, Walters Art Museum.

1564.⁵⁴ Earlier and later festival appearances of personified parts of the world, whether three or four, in the Habsburg Netherlands would be consistently political, delivering a message of Habsburg imperium.

Ortelius' Africa is a lightly draped woman, rendered as a black Moor (even without the frequently applied watercolor) with a sunburst above her head evoking Africa's blazing sun. She holds in one hand a branch of balsam, much valued by sixteenth-century Europeans. She represents the continent's inhabitants by typifying them; her appearance is functionally a costume study, reflecting the growing popularity of the costume book, a new genre of publication in the mid-1500s, and referring to reports that in some of the hottest parts of sub-Saharan Africa, inhabitants went naked or nearly so.⁵⁵ In Ripa's 1613 edition, with redesigned woodcuts, Africa is rendered black by filling in the figure's contours with black ink; this coarse solution was not repeated.

One of the many artists and writers taking up this notion of the Parts of the World personified that so aptly summed up the political and mercantile aspirations of the time, the numismatist, painter, engraver, and publisher Hubert Goltzius (1526–1583), working in the same circles in Flanders as Ortelius, represented the three parts of the world subject to Rome and coin-producing on the lower register of the title page [Fig. 24.9] of his *Caesar Augustus: sive, historiae imperatorum caesarumque romanorum ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae* (ed. princeps, 1574),⁵⁶ one of the new type of numismatic publication at mid-century combining the lives of emperors with a study of the associated coins, reverses as well as portrait obverses. Since the first state of the title page bears the date 1569, Ortelius and Goltzius were developing the personification of Africa in tandem, though Goltzius adhered to Roman models.⁵⁷ Dejected Africa, her body language with head resting on her hand possibly adapted from that of defeated Africa paired with prospering Germania on an engraved portrait of Charles v published in Antwerp in 1562,⁵⁸ is seated on a crocodile

54 Williams S., "Les Ommegangs d'Anvers et les Cortèges du Lord-Maire de Londres", in Jacquot J. (ed.), *Les Fêtes de la Renaissance* (Paris: 1960) vol. II, 349–357; McGrath, "Continents" 52. There is no mention of specific attributes.

55 On the figure as a costume study, see Massing J.P., *The Image of the Black: The 'Age of Discovery' to the Age of Abolition* (Cambridge, MA: 2008) 78.

56 On Goltzius, see Cunnally, *Numismatic Presence*, 190–195; Le Loup W., *Hubertus Goltzius en Brugge 1583–1983* (Bruges: 1984); and Dekesel C.E., *Hubertus Goltzius: The Father of Ancient Numismatics, 1526–1583* (Ghent: 1988).

57 McGrath, "Continents" 56, cited from Le Loup, *Goltzius* 170–171.

58 Enea Vico's portrait (Ill. Bartsch xxx, 339.225) celebrating the triumphs of Charles v in Germany and Africa, was engraved in 1550, but it is safer to assume that Goltzius knew the version published in Antwerp in 1562 (British Museum 1860,0414.262). Germania, now

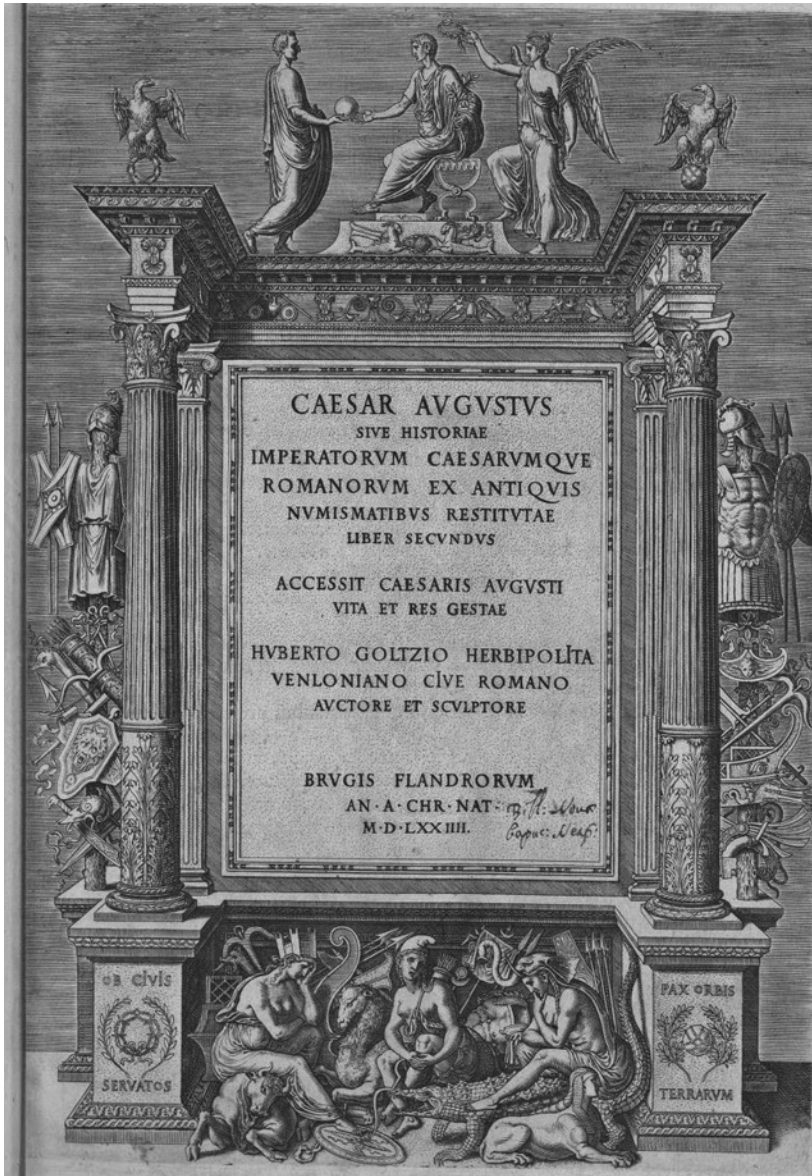


FIGURE 24.9 *Hubert Goltzius after his own design, Title page of Caesar Augustus: sive, historiae imperatorum caesarumque romanorum ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae (Bruges, [H. Goltzius]: 1574). Engraving. Los Angeles, The Getty Research Institute.*

(possibly the first use of this attribute, as McGrath has suggested)⁵⁹ with a sphinx at her side, adapted from the Roman sculpture personifying the Nile in the Vatican gardens. Her elephant headdress is based on a reverse illustrated by Goltzius [Fig. 24.10]. It is not described in the text, although the general caption for the plate refers to trophies of Roman victories in Africa. It is however acknowledged in a prefatory poem celebrating the author's clever title page by Goltzius' friend, the Bruges humanist Adolphus Mekerchus (1528–1591), in a reference to the 'Gaetuli [Berber tribe living south of the Atlas mountains] who wore [protected themselves with?] the dark skins of elephants',⁶⁰ possibly based on Strabo (*Geography*, c. 22 CE), who notes the Mauritians' use of elephant skin shields.⁶¹ The Roman coin illustrated by Goltzius bearing Octavian's head on the obverse and Africa with an elephant scalp headdress on the reverse [Fig. 24.11] can be identified as one minted in Mauretania 33–25 BCE.⁶² Goltzius' Africa was subsequently adapted by Fulvio Orsini for the Three Parts of the World on the title page of his numismatic study of 1577.⁶³

Judged on the basis of known examples, the first painted ensemble of the Four Parts of the World personified is, as Partridge has proposed, that occupying the four corners of the immense *World Map* painted around 1574 at the Villa Caprarola near Rome for Cardinal Alessandro Farnese by Giovanni de Vecchi, the designs apparently begun c. 1568 by Federico Zuccaro.⁶⁴ Whether the development of the concept was independent of that by Ortelius is probably beyond resolution. Given Zuccaro's involvement, it is not surprising that Africa [Fig. 24.12] wears an elephant scalp headdress resembling that of her

thriving, is surrounded by attributes of the arts and abundance, while Africa is accompanied by weapons and agricultural tools.

59 McGrath, "Continents" 56. Though there is a small crocodile in the Capitoline *Nile*, its defining head was long gone in the mid-1500s. It could also have been from the denarius of Julius Caesar with a crocodile on the reverse and the legend AEGYTA CAPTA (illustrated by Goltzius).

60 'Africa dein Libye fervore notabilis ipso, / Aethioppissa parum fano Phaéthonte perusta, / Getuli fuscam pellem vestita Elephanti, / Niliaci tergum squamásque permit Crcodili: / Cui comes est Sphinx, Oedipodis-Sphinx nobile monstrum, / Virginis os vultumque gerens, unguésque leonis, / Harpyiaequé alas volucres, caudámque draconis' (Goltzius, Augustus front matter unpaginated).

61 Strabo, *Geography* xvii.iii.1–11.

62 The obverse with the head of Octavian is on pl. ix, no. 108 as Augustus. See Mazard J., *Corpus Nummorum Numidiaë Mauretaniaëque* (Paris: 1955–1958) no. 122.

63 See note 14.

64 Partridge L., "The Room of Maps at Caprarola, 1573–1575", *The Art Bulletin* 77.3 (1995) 440–41.



FIGURE 24.10 Hubert Goltzius after his own design, "Coin reverses". In Caesar Augustus: sive, historiae imperatorum caesarumque romanorum ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae (Bruges, [H. Goltzius]: 1574) Pl. xxxv. Engraving. Los Angeles, The Getty Research Institute.



FIGURE 24.11 Roman coin with Portrait of Octavian (observe) and Africa (reverse) (minted in Mauretania, 33–25 BCE). Copper alloy, 9.94 grammes. London, British Museum.

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FIGURE 24.12 *Giovanni de Vecchi, "Personification of Africa". Detail of Mappa Mundi, Room of the Maps, Villa Farnese, Caprarola (c. 1574). Fresco.*

IMAGE © ICCD E56266.

predecessor in the Sala Regia. But here she is surrounded by a full complement of attributes, a scorpion in her right hand, a cornucopia of fruit in her left, with a container of wheat at her feet—all featured on the most influential Hadrianic reverse [Fig. 24.2].⁶⁵

Our last example is the figure of Africa gracing a series of engraved maps of the four continents published in Rome in 1597 by architect/cartographer Fausto Rughesi, with a dedication to Vincenzo Gonzaga Duke of Mantua.⁶⁶ Africa, balancing atop the title cartouche of the Map of Africa [Fig. 24.13], is a lightly draped black woman sporting an elephant scalp crest, drawn in profile, as well as pendant earrings and necklace (probably coral) and coddling two roiling snakes with her left hand while with her right, she holds up a bunch of flowers (not a scorpion). She is accompanied by personifications of the Niger River, a young man from the Land of the Blacks through which the Niger runs, with a sunburst halo and holding up a lion, and the Nile as an older white man holding a small crocodile, based on the often-cited Roman sculpture then in the Vatican gardens. The legend is more concerned with the bodies of water than the inhabitants, but the whole is at once sophisticated, pleasantly exotic, and open to decipherment by the educated viewer (first of all Vincenzo Gonzaga). This consistently classical orientation, featuring the elephant headdress, maintains the contrast with the many print series being produced north of the Alps by 1600, where the elephant headdress, in spite of Hubert Goltzius' example, does not appear.

Subsequent Appearances of Africa with an Elephant Scalp Headdress

The Caprarola fresco and Rughesi's engraving, each authoritative in its own way, may well have been Ripa's most immediate visual models. The elephant scalp headdress as an attribute of Africa proved durable, whether employed by itself or in an adaptation of Ripa's Four Parts of the World.⁶⁷ It appeared with

65 Partridge, "Room of Maps" 440. My great thanks to Marga Sanchez (Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome), for prodding the ICCD, Rome, to actually fill my photo request.

66 McGrath, "Continents" n. 95. See further Betz R., *Mapping of Africa: A Cartobibliography of Printed Maps of the African Continent to 1700* (Utrecht: 2007) 174–175.

67 For later personifications of Africa wearing her crest, primarily within series of the Four Parts of the World, see Köllmann, "Erdteile"; Maritz "Personification"; LeCorbeiller C., "Miss America and Her sisters: Personifications of the Four Parts of the World", *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin, New Series* 19,8 (1961) 209–223.; the image resources

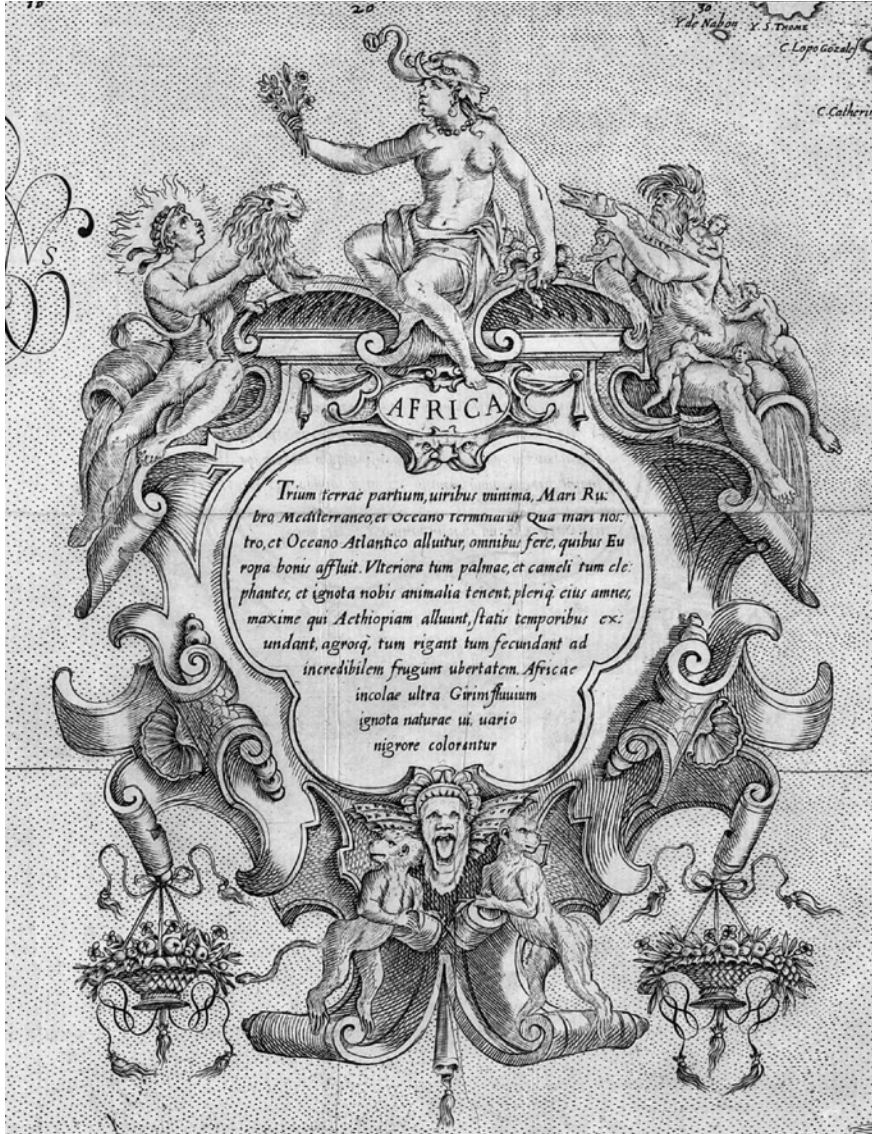


FIGURE 24.13 Fausto Rughesi (cartographer), Map of Africa (1597). Detail. Engraving, 53 × 68.5 cm. Austin, Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin, with permission.

some frequency into the nineteenth century and this later phase can be exemplified by *Africa* [Fig. 24.14], one of four overdoor paintings from 1757–1760 by Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo (1727–1804) representing the Four Continents from the Palazzo Valle-Marchesini-Sala in Vicenza.⁶⁸ In pose, Giandomenico's personification is indebted to her counterpart in his father Giambattista Tiepolo's ceiling fresco of *Apollo and the Four Continents* (1752–1753) in the palace of the Prince Bishop in Würzburg, on which the son assisted. There, Africa is a majestic black woman on a kneeling camel, surrounded by an ostrich, merchants, and, to the rear, an obelisk. Giandomenico was less inventive and the compositions of overdoors should be simple, so he turned to Ripa's basic code: a camel for mysterious Asia, an alligator for raucous America, and floppy hat crowned by an elephant's trunk for awkward Africa, the three set off against a regal Europe, too dignified for an animal equivalency, holding an architectural model. Into the nineteenth century the floppy hat with the ridiculous trunk could define the two ends of the spectrum, either the deprecating humor of porcelain figurines of the continents or a sober reminder of colonial dependency.⁶⁹ I suggest that part of the success of the elephant headdress as attribute is that through all the zigzags of meaning one aspect is constant: it reinforced and sustained the notion of the barbarian.

Numismatic Evidence from the Hellenistic World Unknown to Ripa and His Predecessors

This narrative is not complete without addressing the implications of the lacunae in numismatic knowledge of the Hellenistic world in Ripa's timeframe.⁷⁰

of *The Image of the Black in Western Art*; and Artstor. For good examples of Africa within a series of the Four Continents in porcelain, for which it was very popular, see two pieces in the Chicago Art Institute: a Meissen example dated 1746 modeled by Johann J. Känder (1976.4a) and English Derby from 1770–80 (1994.37.1 1770–80).

- 68 Wolk-Simon L., "Domenico Tiepolo: Drawings, Prints, and Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art", *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 54:3 (1996–1997) 2–68, esp. 23. This version of the hat may derive from Ripa's 1618 edition.
- 69 The imagery extended even into the Americas: *Allegory of the Faith*, c. 1800 by an unidentified Peruvian artist, in the Convent of Santa Catalina de Siena, Quito (inv. no. 2PC21-6-28) for which see Stratton-Pruitt S.L. (ed.), *The Art of Painting in Colonial Quito / El arte de la pintura en Quito colonial* (Philadelphia: 2012) no. 83.
- 70 For the study of Greek coins in the Renaissance, see Kagan J., "Notes on the Study of Greek Coins in the Renaissance", in Peter U. – Weisser B. (eds.), *Translatio Nummorum. Römische Kaiser in der Renaissance* (Mainz: 2013) 57–70. Goltzius Hubert, *Sicilia et Magna Graecia*



FIGURE 24.14 *Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, Personification of Africa, from a series of the Four Continents (c. 1760). Fresco transferred to canvas, 81.9 × 108.6 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Grace Rainey Rogers, 1943.*

This allows at last an answer to the question: Why was the elephant introduced in the form of scalp on Africa's head (and not as a living animal decorously to the side as the other animals characteristic of the parts of the world) in the first place? Baldini is the only one who really tried to work it out. In fact, the earliest documented use of the elephant's scalp headdress is on coins minted c. 314–312 BCE [Fig. 24.15], portraying the deified Alexander the Great (356–323 BCE) wearing a diadem, elephant scalp as a helmet, ram horns of the Egyptian god Zeus-Ammon, and aegis (scale-covered skin with divinely protective powers)—a type of coin that does not appear in Renaissance numismatic studies as far as I am aware. The type was introduced by Alexander's former general, the Macedonian Ptolemy I Soter as governor (323–305 BCE) of

sive historiae urbium et populorum Graeciae ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae liber primus [...] (Bruges, [Hubert Goltzius]: 1576–1581) is the only extended study; it is predictably limited to Italy and Sicily.



FIGURE 24.15 *Alexandria mint (under auspices of Ptolemy I Soter), Tetradrachm of the Deified Alexander (obverse) with Athena (reverse) (c. 316–312 BCE). Silver, 17.1 grammes. London, British Museum.*

IMAGE © TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

the newly conquered Egypt (331 BCE).⁷¹ The coins were minted at Alexandria, founded by Alexander to celebrate his conquest. The image is based on Alexander's own coinage depicting Hercules wearing the scalp of the Nemean lion, killed as one of his great labors. It is indeed a trophy; the victor takes the powers of his ferocious adversary to himself by wearing it. The elephant scalp celebrated Alexander's great victory over the Indian king Porous in 326 BCE. Alexander never fought with war elephants; Porous used them but was beaten by the brilliant Alexander with weaker forces. The victory was critical to Alexander's legacy and therefore to Ptolemy's claim on that legacy. Besides subsequent Ptolemies in Egypt, including Cleopatra III (117 BCE),⁷² successor 'Greek' rulers in Sicily, Mesopotamia, and Bactria (northern India) adopted this headdress, identifying with Alexander's prowess beginning with Soter's son-in-law Agathocles of Syracuse repelling the Carthaginians in 310 BCE.⁷³ Over time the association with Alexander weakened, the profile becoming androgynous. As Toynbee proposed, the figure as adopted in the first

71 Consulted on coins of Alexander the Great: Dahmen K., *The Legend of Alexander the Great on Greek and Roman Coins* (London: 2007) 6–13, 42, 109, 112–118, 157–158; Le Rider G., *Alexander the Great: Coinage, Finances, and Policy* (Philadelphia: 2007) 198–199.

72 See Bonoldi, "Spoglia" n.p. ill.

73 Toynbee, *Hadrian* 35 with ill.



FIGURE 24.16 *Numidian mint*, Coin with Head of Africa (reverse) and Janus (obverse), issued by Bocchus II, King of Numida (49–33 BCE). Copper alloy, 7.1 grammes. London, British Museum.

IMAGE © TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

century BCE by North African rulers such as Juba I and II of Numidia [Fig. 24.16] appears now to be the female deity Africa.

In radical simplification, the Roman conquest of Egypt and much of what the Greeks called Libya reshaped political geography through the creation of linked Roman client states and provinces, the latter including Egypt, Africa, and later Mauretania. In consequence, by the first century BCE there evolved an encompassing expression of the essence of the land, the ‘genius of the place’ and, much like Roma, the deity Africa came into being, ‘Genius totius Africae’, as inscribed on a coin discussed by Agostini.⁷⁴ She is commonly acknowledged by Roman writers such as Claudian.⁷⁵ Wearing her headdress, she is depicted on all kinds of objects,⁷⁶ although the only ancient object other than coinage bearing the head of Africa in Renaissance literature of which I am aware is an engraved gem.⁷⁷ So the woman with an elephant headdress on Roman

74 Agostini, *Discorsi* 49.

75 As in the passage cited above, note 28.

76 The best survey of these objects remains Le Glay, “Africa”.

77 Le Pois Antoine, *Discourse sur les Medalles and Graveures Antiques, principalement Romaines* (Paris, Mamert Patisson: 1579) 144, pl. f. This may have inspired the subsequent carving (c. 1600?) of a cameo (Paris, Cabinet des Médailles) with a head bearing an elephant headdress believed by Rubens to be ancient and to represent Alexander the Great ‘on account of his Indian victory’. See Belkin and Healy, *Rubens* no. 73. Rubens apparently

coinage minted for circulation in Africa, as illustrated by Goltzius [Figs. 24.10–11] or seen on the coinage of Metellus Scipio accompanied by an ear of grain, [Fig. 24.3] or proudly featured on coins of North African kings such as Bocchus II [Fig. 24.15],⁷⁸ was surely not intended as a trophy but as a local goddess, much as some Roman coins minted in North Africa featured the head of Isis or Serapis.

Nevertheless, by the reign of Emperor Hadrian, the relationship of Rome to the provinces had changed: the ‘provinces’ series is about imperium and the benefits bestowed on conquered lands.⁷⁹ Coins minted in Rome following Hadrian’s visit to Africa in 128 (previously to Mauretania and subsequently to Egypt) represent the goddess with her famous headdress reduced to a personification-as-device, with attributes suggesting an exotic, dangerous place to be controlled and uplifted: such as the scorpion (introduced for the first time?), serpents, and wheat. Given the prominence of Hadrianic coinage in Renaissance discussions and of course the useful legend ‘AFRICA’, this combination established the formula upon which Renaissance humanists often drew.

Conclusion

The success of Ripa’s elephant scalp headdress provides a complex case study of an attribute born—in its Renaissance incarnation—from the adaptation of an attribute from the reverse of a Roman coin, thus a pedigreed but not unusual birth within Italian circles of the intellectually elite. Macroeconomic conditions made its development as the identifier of a continent especially propitious and likely to draw attention, but in Ripa’s codification it achieved maturity and durability. Qualities possibly contributing to this longevity fall into three categories: natural association, distinctiveness, and giving form to pre-existing assumptions. The association with the elephant may be considered natural in that the animal was understood to be ‘proper to Africa’.⁸⁰ The

extrapolated from a coin of Hercules wearing a headdress of the Nemean lion; while he missed the allusion to Africa, his reasoning was brilliant and singular for his time.

78 Alexandropoulos J., *Les monnaies de l’Afrique antique, 400 av. J.-C. – 40 ap. J.-C.* (Mirail: 2007) 63 (type).

79 See Toynbee, *Hadrian* 1–130.

80 One of Ripa’s inventions, his subsequent adaptation of the elephant scalp crest for a concept unrelated to Africa, *Vergogna honesta* (Modest Bashfulness), beginning with the 1613 edition, 342–346, is jarring and hardly justified by reference to Pliny on the animal’s behavior. There would be no natural association for most readers and the motif’s ludicrity undermines the decorum of the conceit.

motif of the elephant headdress was distinctive as it could be used by itself and, since a headdress, left the hands free; was recognizable from a distance; and looked satisfyingly savage and alarming (more so than America's actually-worn feather headdress) but also slightly ridiculous (as America's headdress was not) in direct contrast to regal Europe. The association with animal savagery but without the justification of the warrior ethos could also be seen as giving shape to a European disposition to identify Africa as not only 'other' but lesser (and humorously so), indirectly bolstering a sense of the viewer's innate European superiority. No other geographical designation is treated by Ripa with such ambivalence. As an emblematic device it gradually turned into the equivalent of a fisherman's floppy-brimmed hat to which one attaches extra hooks, a mnemonic device for condescending preconceptions of otherness.

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The Four Continents in Seventeenth-Century Embroidery and the Making of English Femininity

Heather A. Hughes

In early modern European visual culture, the embodiment of geographic entities largely continued the legacy of antique personification: female figures dressed in classicizing robes or armor, differentiated by attributes and heraldic devices. Occasionally, however, personifications of cities and countries incorporate referents to local inhabitants for the purposes of immediate identification; in such cases, personification begins to tread on the territory of exemplar.

Personifications of the Four Continents, in particular, inhabit this uneasy space between personification and exemplification. As a group, personifications of the Four Continents—Europe, Asia, Africa, and America—were originally formulated to allegorize the commercial interdependence among the known parts of the world and were thus distinguished primarily by their contributions to the global marketplace. Many subsequent iterations of the theme, however, stress the distinct cultural practices and physical traits believed to characterize the inhabitants of each continent, thereby blurring the line between geographic embodiment and ethnic stereotype; in such versions of the Four Continents, clothing, skin color, and religion assume particular prominence. Through a series of case studies of Four Continents as they occur in English needlework, this paper considers the didactic and ideological consequences of reproducing ethnic difference within the rhetorical framework of personification.

As an art form practiced primarily by women in the domestic sphere, needlework has often been relegated to the margins in critical accounts of seventeenth-century visual culture. Only in the past two decades have historians of art, design, and literature recognized the medium as a pivotal entry point into the mental and material lives of everyday women in early modern English society.¹ Beginning in the sixteenth century, needlework was promoted

1 On the cultural context of English needlework, see especially Frye S., *Pens and Needles: Women's Textualities in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: 2010); Morrall A., "Representations of Adam and Eve in Late Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century English Embroidery", in Melion W.S. – Brusati C. – Enenkel K. (eds.), *The Authority of the Word: Reflecting on Image and Text in*

in religious and pedagogical manuals as a way to instill the values of industriousness, patience, and humility in young noblewomen, while simultaneously preparing them for their later roles as wives, mothers, and stewards of aristocratic households. Yet women did not practice needlework merely to stave off idleness or create functional objects like bed linens and undergarments. Worked textiles—such as tapestries, cushion covers, bed testers, valances, and wall panels—were also integral to the decoration of noble estates, where they provided insulation, comfort, and adornment. Professional craftsmen typically supplied the more complicated of these objects, which were supplemented by textile furnishings created by the female members of the family, even including those with royal status.²

Under the stabilizing influence of the Stuarts, however, seventeenth-century England witnessed the expansion of a merchant class that aspired to a level of material comfort approximating that of the aristocracy. Though largely made by the girls and women of the household itself,³ embroidered mirror frames, cabinets, caskets, and trays now embellished the homes of England's professional classes, advertising their newly acquired wealth and refined taste.⁴ The popularization of the craft was further supported by the greater

Northern Europe, 1400–1700, Intersections: Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture 20 (Leiden – Boston: 2011) 313–351; Morrall A. – Watt M. (eds.), *English Embroidery from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1580–1700: 'Twixt Art and Nature* (New York: 2008); Jones A.R. – Stallybrass P., *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: 2000), especially the chapter 'The needle and the pen: needlework and the appropriation of printed texts'; and Parker R., *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine* (New York: 1989).

- 2 Mary, Queen of Scots was an avid needleworker, particularly during her imprisonment at Carlisle Castle and Chatsworth. At the latter, she collaborated with Elizabeth Talbot, Countess of Shrewsbury on bed testers, cushions, emblems, and panels, including the extensive series 'Noble Women of the Ancient World'. Levey S.M., *The Embroideries at Hardwick Hall: A Catalogue* (Aylesbury: 2007). For an analysis of the political and diplomatic functions of Mary's and Elizabeth I's embroidery, see Frye, *Pens and Needles* 30–74.
- 3 As early as age seven, girls received embroidery lessons from family members, governesses, or at one of the growing number of schools devoted to educating young girls. After practicing different stitches and pictorial motifs on samplers, they advanced to working more complex designs on household objects and personal accessories. For furnishings, the embroidered panels would be brought to a professional upholsterer to be mounted. Staples K., 'Embroidered Furnishings: Questions of Production and Usage', in Morrall – Watt, *English Embroidery* 23–37, esp. 23.
- 4 In seventeenth-century parlance, 'needlework' encompassed a range of techniques that involved using thread to stitch designs on a linen 'canvas'. The term 'embroidery' was reserved for the stitching of more luxurious silk or metallic threads, as well as pearls and beads, on a

availability and diversity of printed imagery, which had fueled the imaginations of professional craftsmen and their noble patrons in the prior century.⁵ In the first half of the seventeenth century, Old Testament themes—most often based on prints from Gerard de Jode's *Thesaurus Sacrarum Historiarum Veteris Testamenti* (1585) or Bernard Salomon's *Quadrins Historique de La Bible* (1553)—were the most common source of inspiration for needlework pictures; scenes depicting virtuous, heroic female role models, such as Susannah, Judith, or Esther, were especially popular and demonstrate how needlework formed a complement to the type of religious instruction valued in Protestant families.

Later embroiderers preferring nonreligious themes profited from the explosion of illustrated books devoted to circulating secular knowledge. For spot motifs of plants, animals, and insects, works of natural history by Conrad Gessner, Rembert Dodoens, Pierre Belon, and Pietro Andrea Matthioli were perennially in demand, whether in the original or through English adaptations.⁶ Emblem books of George Wither, Henry Peacham, and Cesare Ripa were reliable sources for personifications and allegorical programs. Illustrated editions of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* provided the basis for representations of classical mythology. Publishers, capitalizing on this growing demand for designs, also repackaged groups of prints and marketed them as potential sources for needlework.⁷ Finally, embroiderers could consult pattern books, which provided readymade designs based on sheet prints, but were already translated for the medium of needlework.

Given this reliance on imagery drawn from natural history, classical mythology, and the Bible, Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass are correct to point out the irony of needlework's ultimate role as an intermediary between the private and public spheres:

silk or velvet foundation for the ultimate purpose of embellishing home furnishings and fine clothing. Within modern-day academic literature the terms are used somewhat interchangeably. Since the majority of the objects discussed in this essay are considered 'embroidery', I will do the same, unless a more precise term is required.

- 5 For an overview on the expansion of the domestic print trade, see Jones M., *The Print in Early Modern England: An Historical Oversight* (New Haven: 2010); and Griffiths A., *The Print in Stuart Britain, 1603–1689* (London: 1998).
- 6 Swain M.H., *Figures on Fabric: Embroidery Design Sources and Their Application* (London: 1980); Nevinson J.L., "Peter Stent and John Overton, Publishers of Embroidery Designs", *Apollo* 24 (1936) 279–283.
- 7 For example, a 1671 notice by Peter Stent offers 'Four hundred new sorts of Birds, Beasts, Flowers, Fruits, Fish, Flies, Worms, Landskips, Ovals, and Histories, etc. Lively coloured for all sorts of Gentlewomen and School-Mistress Works'. Globe A., *Peter Stent, London Printseller circa 1642–1665* (Vancouver: 1985) 141, nos. 525–532.

Any clear distinction between public and private, inner and outer spaces, was undone in material ways by English needlewomen. Whatever repressive and isolating effects stitchery as a disciplinary apparatus might have been intended to produce, women used it to connect to one another within domestic settings and to connect with the outer world as well.⁸

Yet one pictorial category that was otherwise prevalent in seventeenth-century print culture did not serve as a direct source for needlework: ethnographic illustration. English audiences could find information about the diversity of humankind by reading accounts written by travelers to lands previously unknown or unfamiliar to Europeans. As forerunners to works of ethnography, which was formally codified only in the nineteenth century, travel accounts provided descriptions—and often visual representations—of the physical appearance, dress and bodily adornment, religious customs, and political structures of the various peoples encountered on overseas voyages.

The habits and customs of people around the world were also described in costume books. These were encyclopedic volumes where clothing acts as the basis for comparing people from different cities, countries, and continents, who were often further subdivided by gender, marital status, profession, social rank, or religion.⁹ The objective of the costume book—to map manners and customs onto a geographic region—is also visible in contemporary maps framed by figures dressed in local costume.¹⁰ Given the prevalence of such material in print, where are the domestic embroideries based on the travel anthologies compiled by Samuel Purchas, the costume etchings of Wenceslaus Hollar, or the atlases of John Speed?

8 Jones – Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing* 148.

9 Over fifteen such publications were issued between 1550 and 1650 in Italy, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and England. For an analysis of their social functions, see Rublack U., *Dressing up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: 2010), especially the chapters ‘Nationhood’ and ‘Looking at Others’; and Ilg U., “The Cultural Significance of Costume Books in Sixteenth-Century Europe”, in Richardson C. (ed.), *Clothing Culture, 1350–1650* (Burlington, VT: 2004) 29–47.

10 On the complementary relationship between costume books and early modern cartography, see Grimes K.I., “Dressing the World: Costume Books and Ornamental Cartography”, in Weaver E.B. – Rodini E. (eds.), *A Well-Fashioned Image: Clothing and Costume in European Art, 1500–1850* (Chicago: 2002) 13–21; and Traub V., “Mapping the Global Body”, in Erickson P. – Hulse C. (eds.), *Early Modern Visual Culture: Representation, Race, and Empire in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: 2000) 44–92.

Because little trace survives of widespread, direct female engagement with travel literature, cartography, or costume books,¹¹ we must expand our notions of interaction with this material.¹² This paper will therefore consider how domestic needlework depicting the Four Continents enabled Englishwomen to engage with the 'outer world' that lies beyond Europe's borders. After tracing the translation of the motif from Flanders to England and from print to textile, what follows is an attempt to reconstruct how a selection of embroidered personifications of the Four Continents invited viewers to reflect—sometimes literally—on their identities as Englishwomen in the increasingly global context of early modern England.

The Four Continents: From Netherlandish Print and to English Decoration

Before turning to the needlework, it would be productive to recall the original appearance and function of the Four Continents as a visual allegory. Personifications of the four known continents first appeared together in print on the frontispiece of Abraham Ortelius's world atlas, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Antwerp: 1570) [Fig. 25.1].¹³ In designing his allegory, Ortelius most likely drew from his knowledge of the 1564 civic procession in Antwerp, where an empress

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- 11 Important exceptions to this include elite women whose diaries and library inventories demonstrate interest in these genres. For example, Lady Anne Clifford's diary mentions having George Sandys's *The Relation of a Journey begun an. Dom. 1610, in four books* (London, Richard Field for W. Barrett: 1615) read aloud to her. Extant books with her personal binding include Johann Boemus's *The Manners, Lawes, and Customes of All Nations* (London, George Eld: 1611) and Louis Turquet de Mayerne's *The Generall Historie of Spaine* (London, Adam Islip and George Eld: 1612). Similarly, the 1627 inventory for the personal library of Frances Egerton, Countess of Bridgewater lists Sandys's narrative and several others. See Hackel H.B., *Reading Material in Early Modern England: Print, Gender, and Literacy* (Cambridge – New York: 2005) 222–223, 242.
 - 12 For studies examining media transfer between travel accounts and the decorative arts, see Schmidt B., "Collecting Global Icons: the Case of the Exotic Parasol", in Bleichmar D. – Mancall P.C. (eds.), *Collecting Across Cultures: Material Exchanges in the Early Modern Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: 2011) 31–57; and Odell D., "Porcelain, Print Culture and Mercantile Aesthetics", in Cavanaugh A. – Yonan M.E. (eds.), *The Cultural Aesthetics of Eighteenth-Century Porcelain* (Farnham, Surrey: 2010) 141–158.
 - 13 Boogaart E., "The Empress Europe and Her Three Sisters: The symbolic representation of Europe's superiority claim in the Low Countries, 1570–1655", in *America, Bride of the Sun: 500 Years Latin America and the Low Countries* (Antwerp: 1992) 120–129. Boogaart concedes that the figures on the four corners of Giulio Romano's 1532 triumphal arch



FIGURE 25.1 Title page of Abraham Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Antwerp, Anthonis Coppens van Diest 1573). Hand-colored engraving. Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute.

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from each continent carried those products that her home contributed to the global marketplace, where Antwerp occupied the center. In keeping with the mercantile underpinnings of the 1564 personifications, Ortelius's figures are assigned various attributes that symbolize the natural, material, and cultural wealth of each continent. Ernst van den Boogaart has elucidated how the title page also makes a Eurocentric proclamation about the degree of civilization that has been achieved by the peoples of each continent, indicated here by the placement of the figures on the page and by their clothing and attributes.¹⁴

Wearing an imperial crown and outfitted in *all'antica* dress, to emphasize her classical heritage as the bearer of civilization, Europe sits enthroned above the other figures. In her right hand she holds a scepter, while her left hand grasps a cross-shaped helm, a sign of the maritime prowess that facilitated both mercantile activity and the spread of the Christian faith. Europe's resourcefulness is further indicated by the grape vines winding around the arbor, evidence of the continent's sophisticated agriculture. As the only empress among the group, she visually expresses Ortelius's claim concerning Europe's destiny to reign over the other parts of the world. In the atlas, he writes, 'Above all people, the Europeans had always possessed sharp minds and bodies [...]. Thus, it is clear that the inhabitants of this part of the world have been born to rule over the others'.

Asia, placed on the Europe's more favorable *dexter* side, is dressed in the very materials that made her valuable to European traders: luxurious, bejeweled textiles, evoking the silks that European merchants had imported for centuries. A diadem adorns her hair, secured with a string of pearls or precious gems, and with a slight tilt of her head, she draws our attention to the censer that fills the air with incense. Across the page from Asia and below Europe's left side, Africa turns her head in profile, a convention that permitted viewers to perceive her physical difference; in hand-colored versions she was also painted black. What differentiates her even more from the two previous continents, however, is how much skin she bares. A loosely draped cloth hangs from her shoulders, wrapping around to cover her hips from the front, while leaving her torso exposed. Her minimal attire could be interpreted in multiple ways, from the practical to the rhetorical. As indicated by the sunburst emanating from behind her head, Africa was notable for its intense heat. Therefore, her partial nudity may be an attempt to suggest the realities of living in extreme climates. Yet, anthropological accuracy does not appear to have been one of Ortelius's

map may represent allegories of the Four Continents, but these were never duplicated, as Ortelius's were (ibid. 124, n. 9).

14 Ibid. 122–123.

priorities when developing these personifications. More likely, her limited clothing refers either to the supposed moral laxity of Africa's inhabitants or to the perception that the continent lagged behind Europe and Asia in civilization, as defined by commercial, industrial, and cultural development. Despite the fact that Africa supplied Europe and its colonies with ivory, gold, and slave labor, the figure's only attribute is a branch of Egyptian balsam.

In the lowest register, farthest away from Europe, stand two more personifications. A bust of a naked woman personifies Magellanica, the hypothetical fifth continent, believed to lie south of the Americas and to extend across the entire polar south. The plinth on which she rests bears a flame, denoting the Tierra del Fuego, the known part of this theoretical landmass. To her right lies the recumbent figure of America. As in the case of Africa, the figure places less emphasis on natural resources than on cultural difference. America is entirely nude, to signify the alleged shamelessness and savage heathenism of indigenous Americans. Wearing the distinctive feather headdress of earlier New World images, she holds a human head, a metonymic victim of the cannibalistic practices described by early travelers to Brazil, especially Hans Staden and André Thevet. Further indicators of America's otherness are her feather-tipped club, bow and arrow, and hammock. The only direct evocation of the commodities that excited the earliest European travelers—silver and gold—is the jeweled pendant that descends from her feathered cap. Yet, as America turns her naked body toward the (presumed male) viewer—her own gaze directed downward—she confirms the availability of indigenous bodies *and* indigenous lands.

With the translation and republication of the atlas, Ortelius's conceptualization of the Four Parts of the World was subsequently disseminated across Europe and adopted in a range of print media for decades. These same personifications also appeared on the frontispieces of other types of publications with a global orientation, particularly costume books, travel anthologies, and natural histories.¹⁵ Concurrently, a number of Netherlandish printmakers, such as Adriaen Collaert (after Maarten de Vos), Julius Goltzius, Johann Sadeler, and Crispijn van de Passe, recycled the Continents from the atlas frontispiece,

15 Elizabeth McGrath discusses the reuse of the theme in pageants, engravings, and title pages within the context Antwerp's humanist circles. McGrath E., "Humanism, Allegorical Invention, and the Personification of the Continents", in Vlieghe H. – Balis A. (eds.), *Concept, Design and Execution in Flemish Painting (1550–1700)*, Museums at the Crossroads 5 (Turnhout: 2000) 43–71. For a broader survey of the visual representation of the Four Continents, see Poeschel S., *Studien zur Ikonographie der Erdteile in der Kunst des 16.–18. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: 1985).

making them the focus of four-plate suites depicting the Four Continents and expanding the depth of information offered about each continent.¹⁶ Benefiting from a larger compositional space, each personification resides in her home landscape filled with an array of local signifiers: architecture, plants, animals, historic monuments, weaponry.¹⁷ Yet these series remain loyal to Ortelius's original attributes and his symbolic use of clothing and nudity in their attempts to render each personification as geographically distinct.

Philips Galle's suite of ornament prints is an outlier among this early group. Designed by Marcus Gheeraerts the Elder, each plate features one Ortelian personification surrounded by ornate grotesques and strapwork [Fig. 25.2]. The personifications are accompanied, however, by two to four figures intended to deliver further information about the local customs of each continent's inhabitants, drawing from contemporary costume studies and prints. In 'America', a nude, statuesque woman with a crown of radiating feathers, leaning on a Tupinamba Indian club, personifies the continent. In the top corners, she is joined by generalized representations of South Americans, whose fantastical exoticism is countered by the more accurate depiction of an Inuit man and woman (with child) in the bottom corners of the image. Dressed in sealskin coats and pants, the figures are based on John White's watercolors of the captive Inuits that Martin Frobisher brought from North America to England.¹⁸ Rather than merely rehearsing the archetypal American feather headdress or cape, Gheeraerts used the Four Continents as an occasion to bridge the ornamental, the allegorical, and the ethnographic.

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- 16 Diels A. – Leesberg M. – Balis A., *The Collaert Dynasty*, New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450–1700 (Ouderkerk aan den IJssel: 2005) part 6, 35–39, nos. 1314–1317; Hollstein F.W.H. – Boon K.G. – Scheffer J.G.H., *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, Ca. 1450–1700 Aegidius Sadeler to Raphael Sadeler II* (Amsterdam: 1980) vol. 21, 163–164, nos. 493–946; Hollstein F.W.H. – Schuckman C. – Scheffer J.G.H., *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, Ca. 1450–1700 Maarten de Vos* (Rotterdam: 1995) vol. 46, 278, nos. 1400–1403; Hollstein F.W.H. – Boon K.G. – Verbeek J., *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, Ca. 1450–1700 Van Ostade – De Passe* (Amsterdam: 1964) vol. 15, 205, nos. 597–600.
- 17 Collaert's engravings after Maarten de Vos also helped popularize the convention of pairing the Four Continents with geographically specific animals. In this case, an armadillo with America, a camel with Asia, and a crocodile with Africa. McGrath, "Humanism" 57–58; and Silver L., "World of Wonders: Exotic Animals in European Imagery", in Cuneo P.F. (ed.), *Animals and Early Modern Identity* (Farnham, Surrey – Burlington, VT: 2014) 294–295.
- 18 British Museum inv. nos. 1906,0509.1.30 and 1906,0509.1.29. See Sloan K., *A New World: England's First View of America* (Chapel Hill: 2007) 168–169, no. 36.

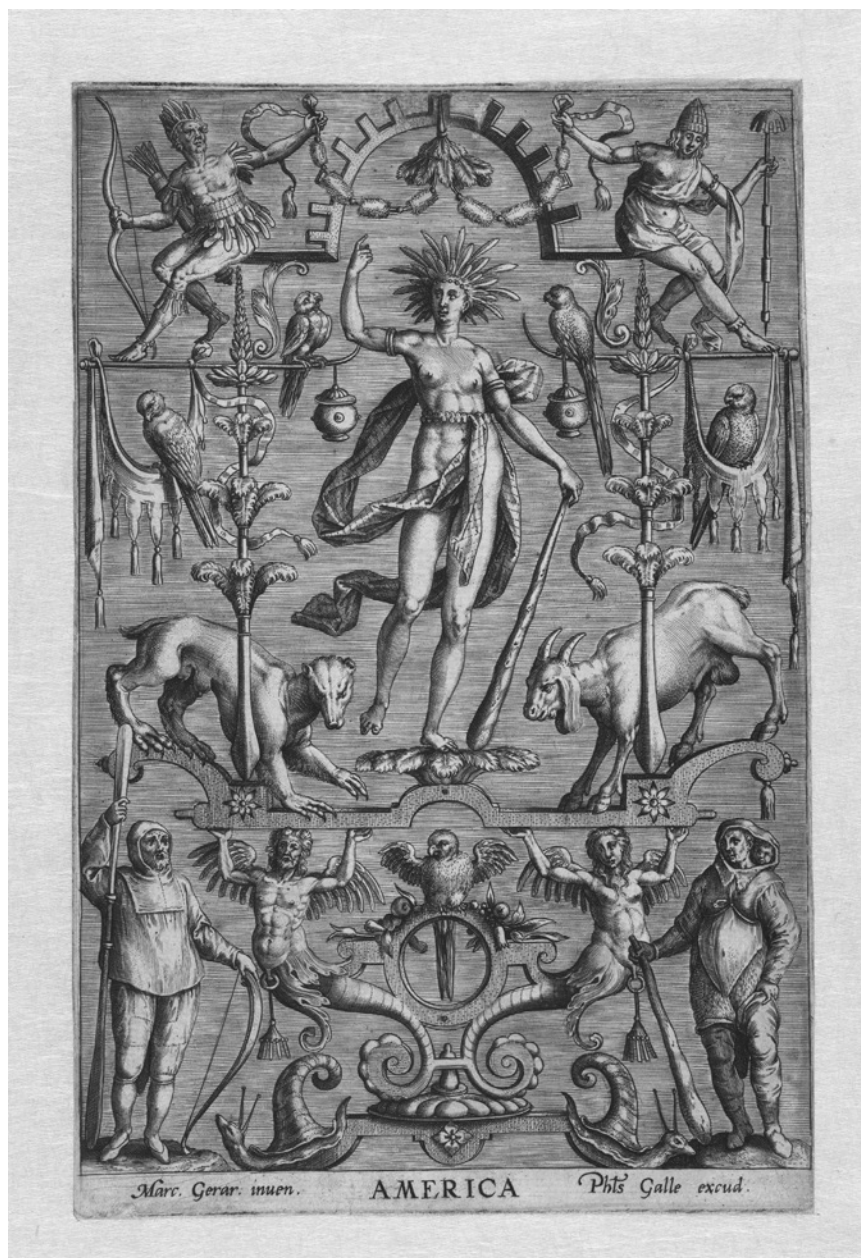


FIGURE 25.2 Anonymous, after Marcus Gheeraerts the Elder, "America", from a series of the Four Continents (c. 1590–1600). Engraving. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1919-1993.

Gheeraerts's suite is one of several that eventually acted as agents in the transmission of the Netherlandish-derived iconography for the Four Continents to England. Less than twenty years after the Flemish refugee's death in England around 1590, his version of the Four Continents, together with the Four Elements, served as inspiration for a group of stained-glass windows in Verulam House at Gorhambury, the country estate of Sir Francis Bacon.¹⁹ Shortly thereafter, Galle's Four Continents, from *Prosopographia* (Antwerp: 1590), were employed in a plaster frieze above a wooden overmantel in Burton Agnes Hall in Yorkshire (1610); they were accompanied by fourteen other personifications from the same emblem book. De Vos's personifications later appeared in myriad forms of architectural decoration: they were carved in relief for chimneypieces or overmantels in Rawdon House in Hertfordshire, Chipchase Castle in Northumberland (1630s), Crewel Hall in Cheshire (1615), and in the form of staircase newel posts in Dorchester Abbey in Oxfordshire (1612).²⁰

These material manifestations of the Four Continents, like their print sources, are adaptations from Ortelius's title page rather than literal copies. Nevertheless, they preserve certain details that, over the course of time, became essential to personifications of each continent—America's feathered accessories, nudity, and cannibalism; Africa's seductive *déshabille*; Asia's veiled crown, luxurious gown, and smoking censer; and Europe's imperial crown, scepter, and classicizing garments. In all the aforementioned cases, however, the appeal of the Four Continents for domestic architectural decoration was limited to the nobility and other elite members of society. In the following century, however, two additional factors would enable broader familiarity with the motif: the adoption of needlework practices in the homes of middle-class families and increased volume of local and Continental print sources.

The Four Continents in English Needlework: From Paper to Cloth

For English embroiderers, the Four Continents proved to be a versatile allegory, suitable for a variety of material and thematic contexts. In some cases, the personifications play a supporting role for a central, primary composition, as in the case of the embroidered panel depicting the Old Testament story the

19 Wells-Cole A., *Art and Decoration in Elizabethan and Jacobean England: The Influence of Continental Prints, 1558–1625* (New Haven: 1997) 90; Archer M., “‘Beest, Bird or Flower’: Stained Glass at Gorhambury House”, *Country Life* 159 (June 1976) 1451–54, 1562–64.

20 Wells-Cole A., *Art and Decoration* 113–114, 180.

Sacrifice of Isaac [Fig. 25.3]. Although the most skilled and creative embroiderers might choose to invent their own compositions, this panel indicates that, more typically, the embroiderer or pattern drawer combined motifs from different printed sources. In the case of this former casket lid, the main image is a simplified version of Gerard de Jode's engraving of the same subject, but the personifications of the Four Continents likely derive from a series published by John Stafford in the 1630s [Figs. 25.4–7].²¹ Note the open book with *Biblia Sacra* inscribed across the books that rest on the laps of both the embroidered and engraved versions of Europe, confirming the superiority of that continent as the first adopter of the true religion. Additionally, an armillary sphere of global navigation accompanies the figure of Africa. Variants of this manifestation of the Four Continents adorn the vast majority of extant embroideries, implying that the designs were based on one pattern or were even supplied by the same draughtsman.

This panel, dated and initialed 1649 EN across the sphere, also illustrates how these personifications could contribute to the educational mandate of domestic needlework. In their embroidered form, the personifications are largely stripped of allusions to the global marketplace. Africa is regularly pictured with a single balsam branch in the embroideries, but only Asia carries her incense consistently. What remains, however—elaborate headdresses, primitive weaponry, exotic flora, and strange animal companions—helped convey the spectacular diversity of peoples, plants, and animals across the world. When paired with religious content, as here, they could elicit wonder and appreciation for the vast complexity of God's creation. As a model for the 'virtue of obedience to parental authority and faith in divine love', this narrative was apparently quite popular among embroiderers; at least thirty versions survive today.²² When framed by the Four Continents, the Christian moral takes on universal significance, reminding the viewer that all are subject to God's will and, should they choose to accept it, his love.²³

21 The series was later advertised by Peter Stent in the 1653 and 1662, and possibly by John Overton in 1673. Globe, *Peter Stent* 127, no. 484; Griffiths A., *The Print in Stuart Britain, 1603–1689* (London: 1998) 308, no. 8; and Jones M., *The Print in Early Modern England* 17–18.

22 Brooks M.M., *English Embroideries of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: In the Collection of the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford: 2004) 36.

23 A similar panel of this subject can be found in the collection of the Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, where the Four Continents are accompanied by the Four Elements (1981-28-116).



FIGURE 25.3 *Pictorial Embroidery of the Four Continents and The Sacrifice of Isaac* (1649). Silk and metallic threads, glass beads, and wire on silk; raised work. 47 × 35 cm. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, The Elizabeth Day McCormick Collection, 47.1032. IMAGE © 2015 MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON.

The Continents serve a similar cosmological purpose even when encircling representations of romantic couples. This theme plays up the pastoral tranquility of the English countryside as a favorite decoration for objects commemorating a betrothal or marriage.²⁴ The genre is typified by the finely executed bead-work panel in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, initialed and dated *AH 1651* [Fig. 25.8]. Enclosed in an oval cartouche, an aristocratic couple dressed according to the current fashions of the Caroline court stand at the edge of their estate. A sun and moon above them announce the cosmic approval of their union, the rewards of which are made evident by the natural abundance surrounding them. Their rural paradise seems to burst with botanical and zoological diversity, where certain motifs—the lemon tree, dog, rabbit—also symbolize

24 On the biblical allusions of ‘companionate couples’, see Morrall, “Representations of Adam and Eve” 348–349.



FIGURE 25.4 John Stafford (publisher), “Europa,” from the Four Continents (c. 1630). Engraving. London, British Museum, 1870,0514.1176. IMAGE © TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.



FIGURE 25.5 John Stafford (publisher), "Asia", from the *Four Continents* (c. 1630). Engraving. London, British Museum (1870,0514.1177).
IMAGE © TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.



FIGURE 25.6 John Stafford (publisher), "Africa", from the *Four Continents* (c. 1630). Engraving. London, British Museum (1870,0514.1178).
IMAGE © TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.



FIGURE 25.7 John Stafford (publisher), "America", from the *Four Continents* (c. 1630). Engraving. London, British Museum (1870,0514.1179).

IMAGE © TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.



FIGURE 25.8 *Beadwork Panel with Lady and Cavalier surrounded by the Four Continents* (1651). Silk thread; opaque and translucent glass beads on satin, 41.3 × 54.6 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Estate of James Hazen Hyde, 1959 (59.208.68).

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aspirations for a successful marriage: love, fidelity, fertility. Positioned at the corners of the panel, the Four Continents exist in a separate realm; their spatial and temporal remove is encoded by their exclusion from the cartouche and by the unadorned silk satin ground from which they emerge. Noting the auxiliary role of the personifications, Andrew Morrall observes that the couple's 'harmonious domestic world [...] stands at the eye of the greater macrocosm and maintains the latter's orbit by its centrifugal pull'.²⁵ As in analogous panels that pair such couples with the Five Senses, the Four Elements, or the Four Seasons, the Four Continents serves a higher iconographic purpose—to designate the exalted status of marriage within God's universe.²⁶

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ See, for example, Morrall – Watt, *English Embroidery* 284–285, no. 83; and Brooke X., *Lady Lever Art Gallery: Catalogue of Embroideries* (Bath: 1992) 64–65, inv. no. LL5259.

Nevertheless, this panel also epitomizes how the Four Continents can act as agents in the transmission of knowledge about foreign cultures, as it puts unusual pressure on the dichotomy between personification and exemplification. The tension is most discernible in the figure of Africa. In all the embroideries that follow the model provided by the Stafford engraving, bare-chested Africa wears only a knee-length skirt. By contrast, the designer of the beaded cabinet lid opted to render Africa in a belted tunic, secured with buttons and loops, though curiously topped by flat English collar. Wielding a bow and arrow, Africa has also now become an archer whose gender is ambiguous. Claire Le Corbeiller explains that Africa's new identity resulted from confusion over the proper attributes for America and Africa.²⁷ In actuality, this figure draws on images of Ethiopian soldiers, examples of which can be seen in the sixteenth-century costume books of Cesare Vecellio and Jean-Jacques Boissard [Fig. 25.9].²⁸ As a member of a particular ethnic and social group—as pictured by earlier European printmakers—does this figure embody Africa or represent all Africans?

America also blurs the lines between personification and exemplar, evincing what has been referred to as the 'Tupinambization' of European representations of Native Americans.²⁹ In the strictest personifications, America might wear little more than a feather headdress and a piece of fabric draped modestly across her hips [Figs. 25.1, 25.2, & 25.7]. On the beaded panel, however, she wears a skirt composed of several layers of blue, green, yellow, and ochre feathers. The skirt and headdress both exaggerate the feather skirt and crown worn by the Tupinamba of Brazil. By 1651, however, these attributes were associated with all Native Americans from both North and South America, despite, as William Sturtevant notes, 'their actual limitation to coastal Brazil and the probability that among the Tupinamba the feather skirt was a man's ornament worn only on infrequent and special occasions'.³⁰ Nevertheless,

27 Le Corbeiller C., "Miss America and Her Sisters: Personifications of the Four Parts of the World", *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 19,8 (1961) 219.

28 Bruyn Abraham and Boissard Jean Jacques, *Habitus variarum orbis gentium. Habitz de nations estranges. Trachten mancherley Völcker des Erdscreyts* (Mechelen, Caspar Rutz: 1581) fol. 59r; Vecellio Cesare, *Habiti antichi, et moderni di tutto il mondo* (Venice, Appresso i Sessa: 1598). In England, this figure was used to personify Africa on Renold Elstrack's title page for Pierre d'Avity's *The estates, empires, & principallities of the world* (London, Adam Islip for Mathewe Lowne and Iohn Bill: 1615).

29 Sturtevant W.C., "La Tupinambisation des Indiens d'Amérique du Nord", in Thérien G. (ed.), *Les Figures de l'Indien*, Les Cahiers du Département d'Études Littéraires 9 (Montreal: 1988) 293–303.

30 Sturtevant W.C., "The Sources for European Imagery of Native Americans", in Doggett R. – Hulvey M. (eds.), *New World of Wonders: European Images of the Americas, 1492–1700* (Washington, DC: 1992) 25–33, here 28.



FIGURE 25.9 "Ethiopian Soldier". Cesare Vecellio's *Habiti antichi, et moderni di tutto il mondo* (Venice, Appresso i Sessa: 1598).

the incorporation of these 'ethnographically identifiable' artifacts, misplaced though they may be, substantiates this representation as one of actual Native American cultural practice.³¹

Reclining on the grass, extending their bare legs, America and Africa practically mirror one another, inviting inevitable comparison. Proudly brandishing their bows and arrows and assigned the attire of a nobleman and soldier, they assume the masculine *habitus* of the Brazilian and the Ethiopian, respectively. These common traits establish their shared difference from Europe and Asia. Dressed in royal feminine splendor, the ensembles of those crowned women recall the type first popularized by Queen Henrietta Maria: slashed, puffed slashed sleeves that tie at the elbow, cuffs and flat collars composed of white lace, and an open gown revealing a petticoat enhanced by woven or embroidered patterns. Yet the tiered scalloping at the edge of their stomachers pulls them back into the antique styling more typical of early modern personifications, reflecting the tendency among seventeenth-century embroideries to integrate contemporary silhouettes with the antique referents of traditional classicizing personifications.

Although their mutual courtly sophistication intimates that the peoples of Europe and Asia have achieved comparable levels of cultural achievement, which supersede those of Africa and America, their overall likeness throws their small but significant differences into greater relief. The books held in Asia's left hand and in Europe's right signify that they belong to societies that follow organized religions. Yet, Asia's book is closed, and according to the verses written by George Wither on the related engraving, this choice is not accidental [Fig. 25.5]:

In me God placed his Earthly Paradise,
Sweet Gums, rich Gems, and every wholesome spice.
I was the first to whom Redemption came,
And I was first that forfeited the same,
But yet of this (though vainly) I can boast,
I keep my Fashions, though my Faith I lost.³²

31 Mason P., *Infelicities: Representations of the Exotic* (Baltimore: 1998) 45; Rebecca Brienien builds on Mason's analysis of the 'reality effect' caused by the incorporation of ethnographic details in otherwise exotic images of the Tupinamba. Brienien R.P., *Visions of Savage Paradise: Albert Eckhout, Court Painter in Colonial Dutch Brazil* (Amsterdam: 2006) 88–93.

32 I have modernized Wither's spelling throughout this paper, though I have retained the original pattern of capitalization. The last line may also double as a reference to Muslim

For Wither, Asia—or in this case, the Levant—is a place of abundance and great wealth, but it remains morally inferior to Europe owing to pride, vanity, and ongoing resistance to Christianity. In Europe, however, ‘the word of truth hath place’ [Fig. 25.6]. Furthermore, that continent leads in art, warfare, and maritime trade, successes for which she has ‘obtained [her] crown’. In the beadwork panel there are no direct invocations of these earthly achievements, though her imperial crown remains. The basis for her ultimate outranking of Asia thus rests on one foundation: her adherence to the one true faith.

Despite the power imbalance, Europe and Asia share still another quality that ensures their legibility as Africa’s and America’s moral and cultural superiors: whiteness. The faces and hands of Asia and Europe are composed of pearlescent ivory beads, and a range of yellow and ochre tones suggest their medium-blond hair. If these figures almost blend into the panel’s cream-colored silk foundation, the two dark-skinned continents boldly announce their alterity—not only from Asia and Europe, but from the two English figures as well.

Though the practice of using skin color to differentiate the Four Continents was not unusual per se, it was also not a prerequisite. This fact is illustrated by a beadwork basket depicting Charles II and his Portuguese consort, Catherine of Braganza [Fig. 25.10].³³ Somatically and sartorially, the Four Continents are virtually identical here; the silk ground is left unworked and uncolored for the face and hands of all four. Compared to the beadwork panel discussed above, there is minimal concern for ethnographic description or differentiation. The figures thus reclaim their status as embodiments of continents, signifying not only the global order in which the royal marriage occurs, but perhaps even the pair’s imperial aspirations.

convert Haseki Hürrem Sultan, the wife of Ottoman sultan Suleiman ‘the Magnificent’. Her rise from harem slave to the sultan’s favorite wife, ‘Roxolana’ was the subject of many European works of literature, drama, music, art, and dance. Asia’s towering veiled turban may be an allusion to visual representations of Haseki Hürem by painters and printmakers such as Matteo Pagani (1540–1550), Titian (c. 1550–1560), and Theodor de Bry (1596). See Yermolenko G.I., *Roxolana in European Literature, History and Culture* (Farnham, Surrey – Burlington, VT: 2010).

- 33 Illustrated in Morrall – Watt, *English Embroidery* 134–136, cat. no. 13. On the basis of the animal attendants (stag, leopard, griffin, cockatrice), this entry incorrectly lists the figures in the following order, clockwise from top left: Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. With careful observation, however, one discovers Europe’s crown and scepter (bottom left), and America’s feathered fan and crown (bottom right). Africa and Asia are more difficult to distinguish, though the layering of fabrics on the headdress of the figure on the top left may suggest a turban.

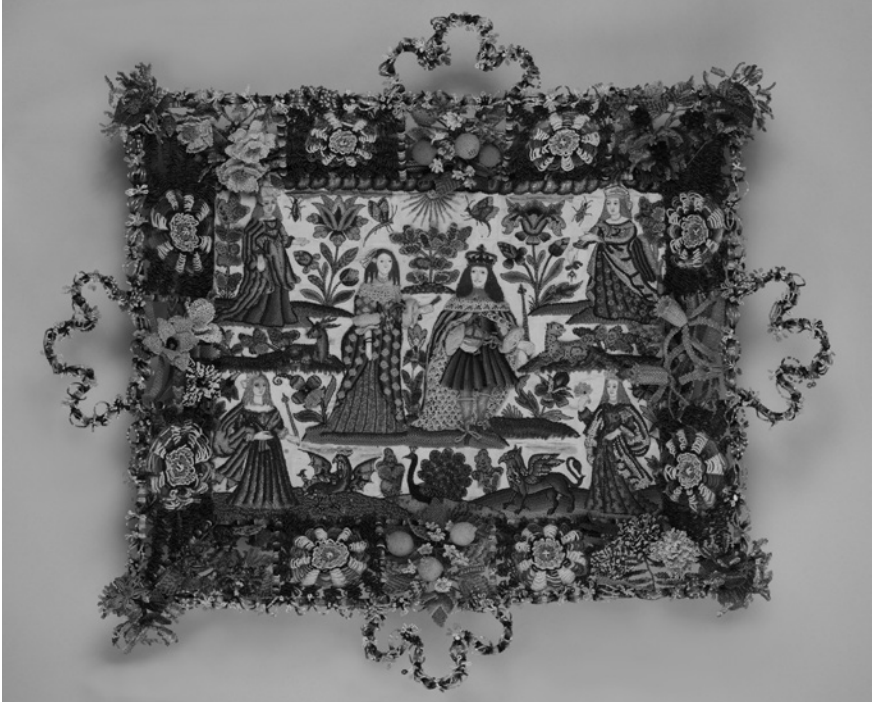


FIGURE 25.10 *Beadwork Basket with Charles II and Catherine of Braganza surrounded by the Four Continents (after 1662). Wire armature with beadwork of glass beads; satin worked with glass beads, seed pearls, silk and metal thread; couching, split, and satin stitches, 68.5 × 80 × 20.3 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Mrs. Thomas J. Watson Gift, 1939 (39.13.1).*
COURTESY OF WWW.METMUSEUM.ORG.

For the remaining embroideries skin color was a salient feature in representations of the 'lesser' continents, particularly Africa [Fig. 25.11]. Whether this tinting was done at the suggestion of a pattern drawer or a teacher, or was the result of the embroiderer's own knowledge, this act has broader implications than the simple reproduction of an established visual convention. It constituted a contribution to the increasingly intertwined moral and aesthetic discourses on blackness in seventeenth-century England.

Beauty, Blackness, and the English Ideal

Prior to England's successful entry into the Atlantic slave trade, the African presence in the country was minimal. This absence did not preclude their



FIGURE 25.11 *Needlework Picture with Pastoral Scene and the Four Continents* (c. 1660-70). *Silk and linen (?) fabrics, silk and metal threads, glass beads, feather filaments, padding pearls, wire; detached needlepoint, knots, basket, cut pile, laid, long and short, overcast, satin, and tent stitches, 41 × 51 cm. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Oxford, The Feller Collection, Gift of Micheál and Elizabeth Feller, 2014 (WA2014.71.55).*

PHOTO © CHRISTIE'S IMAGES/BRIDGEMAN IMAGES.

representation in early modern drama and art,³⁴ thereby introducing English audiences to the dark-skinned peoples they had only heard about in tales of the ancient 'Ethiopia' or in the more recent descriptions assembled by Richard Hakluyt and Samuel Purchas.³⁵ As the earliest accounts reveal, the cause of

34 On the participation of actual Africans in English pageants, see Fryer P., *History of Black People in Britain* (London: 1984) 9–10, 25–32, 79–88.

35 The representation of Africans in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English drama and literature has been the subject of many major studies since the middle of the twentieth century. Anthony Barthelemy, Ania Loomba, Emily Bartels, and Kim Hall are only a few of the key contributors to this rich field. For imagery of the same period, see

dark skin was a mystery to writers, who posited a range of theories. Was it a persistent sunburn? Or, as one traveler asked, was it a sign of the 'natural infection' that allegedly marked all descendants of Noah's son Ham, who was punished for gazing upon his drunken father's naked body?³⁶

The former theory was ultimately disproved by both the increased travel of Englishmen to Africa and the arrival of Africans in England. Wither's description of Africa demonstrates, however, that the latter theory still held currency into the seventeenth century, at the very least as a poetic device. He writes, 'By Cham's black issue I at first was man'd / And for his blushless Fact, my Face was tann'd' [see Fig. 25.6]. In these two short lines, Wither assimilates several threads of thought about the moral deficiencies of Africans and their appearance. By invoking Ham's 'blushless' response to his father's nakedness, we can detect parallels with contemporary commentaries. On the apparent shamelessness of Africans, particularly their women, Jennifer Morgan observes that travel writers 'looked to socio-sexual deviance to indicate savagery', and were particularly critical of perceived sexual deviance among women.³⁷ Purchas's translation of Pieter de Marees's report on Africa's Gold Coast declares that in Sierra Leone, 'one man hath as many wives as hee is able to keepe and mainetaine. The women also are much addicted to leacherie, especially with strange Countrey people'; he later described the women as being 'of a cruder nature and stronger posture than the Females in our Lands in Europe'.³⁸ Marees thus found these women not only appallingly sinful compared to his countrywomen, but also lacking in femininity.

Many historians of the period have argued that the moral shortcomings of Africans were not racialized in the modern sense of the term, whereby physical appearance is perceived to be the signifier of immutable intellectual or moral characteristics. Instead, as the theory goes, these differences were attributed to different cultural practices, namely the absence of Christianity

Bindman D. – Gates H.L. – Dalton K.C.C. (eds.) *The Image of the Black in Western Art*, vol. 111: *From the "Age of Discovery" to the Age of Abolition*, 3 parts (Cambridge, MA – Houston, TX 2011); and Erickson P. – Hulse C. (eds.), *Early Modern Visual Culture: Representation, Race, and Empire in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: 2000).

36 Best George, 'A True discourse of the late voyage of discoverie', in Hakluyt R. (ed.), *The principall nauigations, voiajes, traffiques and discoueries of the English nation*, second edition (London, George Bishop, Ralph Newberie and Robert Barker: 1598) vol. 1, 52.

37 Morgan J.L., "Some Could Suckle over Their Shoulder": Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500–1770", *The William and Mary Quarterly* 54,1 (1997) 167–192, here 170.

38 Quoted in *ibid.* 183.

and its attendant moral codes. Nevertheless, as Elizabeth Sutton asserts, the visual representation of blacks alongside descriptions of their inferiority may be implicated in the eventual 'integration of culture with nature and with the physical externalization of difference'.³⁹ On the legacy of travel images akin to those in the De Marees account, she writes:

Black skin, not initially a feature justifying discrimination in [the] 16th century, became emblematic of the cultural difference that Europeans used to rationalize African inferiority. Difference later understood as race was first distinguished by cultural behavior in these accounts and these actions came to be associated as inherent to and an essential part of a people with a certain kind of morphology.⁴⁰

Though Sutton's argument is well taken, young girls were not the target audience for these travel accounts. How, then, would such messages be transmitted to other sectors of a society that would eventually come to justify the enslavement of Africans, based on an inherent inferiority made visible by their skin color?

Portraits of aristocratic Englishwomen and their black servants were another, more public, medium through which blackness was framed negatively, but in this case, as an aesthetic counterpoint to English beauty and 'fairness'.⁴¹ Originating in sixteenth-century Italy, this portrait genre became especially fashionable in the second half of the following century in England and the Dutch Republic, where the wealth was increasingly dependent on foreign trade, settlement, and slave labor.⁴² As Kim Hall and others have argued, these

39 Sutton E.A., *Early Modern Dutch Prints of Africa* (Farnham, Surrey – Burlington, VT, 2012) 91. A similar point is made by Erickson P., "Representations of Blacks and Blackness in the Renaissance", *Criticism* 35,4 (1993) 499–527.

40 Ibid. 183.

41 In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the concept of 'fairness' could refer to either interior, moral purity or to one's external appearance. At the same time, the color black was associated with the sinful and demonic. For a discussion on the theological and racial implications of this discourse, see Hall K.F., *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: 1995) 107–116.

42 On the Continental origins of black page motif in portraiture, see Kaplan P.H.D., "Titian's 'Laura Dianti' and the Origins of the Motif of the Black Page in Portraiture", *Antichità Viva* 21,1 (1982) 11–18; 21, 4 (1982) 10–18; and Bestor J.F., "Titian's Portrait of Laura Eustochia: The Decorum of Female Beauty and the Motif of the Black Page", *Renaissance Studies* 17,4 (2003) 628–673.

paintings serve two functions: first, to advertise one's connection to overseas enterprises, and second, to use 'blackness to create a value for whiteness'.⁴³ Peter Lely's portrait of Elizabeth Murray illustrates some of the conventions of the type: an anonymous dark-skinned African youth, either a boy or a short-haired girl, emerges from the shadowy margins of the painting to gaze adoringly at his elegant, beautiful white mistress [Fig. 25.12]. Often the servant offers the main sitter some type of exotic commodity, such as pearls, coral, or seashells. In Lely's painting, the servant's gift is one of several details responsible for highlighting the distinction between Murray's pale skin and the African's dark skin. The servant, wearing a gleaming white pearl earring, presents a tray of roses, the white and pink petals of which echo Murray's blushing face. Though his eyes are directed upward to her face, the boy is positioned at the same level as her radiant décolletage. By using a black figure to underscore the sitter's fair skin, this painting and others of its kind contributed to the new role that whiteness played in demarcating English aristocratic identity and the dependence on contact with Africans for assigning a positive value to whiteness.⁴⁴

This preoccupation is evident on a more popular register in an embroidered depiction of the meeting between the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon, a popular biblical theme in domestic needlework [Fig. 25.13].⁴⁵ The panel shows the queen offering gifts from her native land, which was understood to exist either in Ethiopia or Arabia in early modern biblical commentary, literature, and art.⁴⁶ Significantly, however, English embroiderers opted to represent the queen as a white, European woman. Jennifer Martin observes that by shifting the queen's exoticism from her body to her gifts and accessories—her pearl-encrusted urn, gold, spices, and balsam—these objects consequently evince the seventeenth-century English culture's paradox-laden relationship

43 Hall, *Things of Darkness* 10.

44 Ibid. 253.

45 The designer of this particular panel seems to have combined certain conventions from images of Esther and Ahasuerus (the king extending his scepter) with those of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (the parasol). The latter subject was occasionally combined with the Four Continents in embroidery, perhaps because the two motifs share the theme of the presentation of foreign goods to a sovereign. For examples, see Christie's, London, South Kensington, 14 November 2000, lot. 30; and Christie's, London, South Kensington, 20 November 2001, lot 123.

46 She is referred to as the "Queen of the South" in *Luke* 11:31. For a fuller discussion of this theme in English needlework and its possible resonances with its female makers, see Jones A.R., "Needle, Scepter, Sovereignty: The Queen of Sheba in Jacobean Amateur Needlework", *Early Modern Culture: An Electronic Seminar* 1,3 (February 2003), www.eserver.org/emc.



FIGURE 25.12 Sir Peter Leely, "Elizabeth Murray, Lady Tollemache, later Countess of Dysart and Duchess of Lauderdale (1626–1698) with a Black Servant" (c. 1651). Oil on canvas, 124 × 120 cm. RICHMOND-UPON-THAMES, HAM HOUSE © NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES.

with the foreign cultures on which it depended for exotic, luxury goods. While the foreignness of Sheba's objects is a source of their value, so is their ability to be absorbed into English culture, an absorption that is symbolized by Sheba's own Anglicization through her white skin, clothing, and accessories.⁴⁷

47 Summit J. "Domestic Shebas: A Response to Ann Rosalind Jones, 'Needle, Scepter, Sovereignty'", *Early Modern Culture: An Electronic Seminar* 1,3 (February 2003), www.eserver.org/emc.



FIGURE 25.13 *Raised Work Picture of the Arrival of the Queen of Sheba at King Solomon's Encampment (second half of the seventeenth century). Private Collection. COURTESY OF BONHAMS.*

In this particular embroidery, the queen's exotic status has also been transferred to the figure standing closest to her: a pearl-bedecked black attendant, who shields the queen with a parasol.

Within the context of embroidery, the notion of English moral and aesthetic superiority was made more explicitly in mirror frames depicting the Four Continents. Mirrors were still relatively expensive luxury objects. When they were further enhanced with frames embroidered with silk threads, pearls, and beads, these mirrors became true material representations of status and refinement. They were, however, items that remained fraught with gendered anxieties about vanity, frivolity, and unbridled sexuality. To offset such concerns, frames often would have morally edifying content, like one unfinished mirror at the Lady Lever Art Gallery [Fig. 25.14].⁴⁸ The final product would have depicted the Four Continents on

48 Both sections of the mirror are described and illustrated separately in Brooke, *Lady Lever Art Gallery: Catalogue of Embroideries* 66–67, inv. no. LL5260 and 70–71, inv. no. LL5265. The Lever Gallery also has a completed mirror representing the Four Continents and a pastoral scene, 193, inv. no. LL5219.



FIGURE 25.14 *Paris and Pallas Athena with the Four Continents (second half of the seventeenth century). Raised work, 30 × 71 cm. Port Sunlight, Lady Lever Art Gallery.*

each corner, busts of Athena and Paris on the top and bottom borders, and, along the sides, the full-length figures of Aphrodite and Hera, dressed as English noblewomen. The narrative of the mirror would have therefore been the Judgment of Paris, the contest in which Zeus called on the Trojan prince to select the ‘fairest’ or most beautiful among Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite. Turning down Hera’s offer of political power and Athena’s offer of wisdom and military strength, Paris is ultimately swayed by Aphrodite’s promise to secure the most beautiful woman in the world as his wife—the already married Helen of Sparta. The designer’s intent in selecting this story for a mirror may have been to remind its owner of the pitfalls of prioritizing beauty. The pairing of these mythological figures with the Four Continents, however, underscores the beauty—and fairness—of European women. Next to the shorthaired, dark-skinned, and scantily dressed African and Native American, it would be impossible not to perceive Europe’s similarity to the ivory-skinned goddesses Hera and Aphrodite, whose magnificent ensembles were composed by applying embroidered silks, lace, and woven textiles onto the figures. Likewise, had the mirror been finalized, the owner would have recognized both her own likeness staring back at her, as well as her affinity to these exemplars of beauty, sophistication, and civility.

A mirror that *was* completed illustrates how the Four Continents could function as an instructive motif even in isolation [Fig. 25.15]. The continents, as well as their accompanying animals, are almost identical in design and coloring as those in the panel pairing the personifications with a vignette of shepherds and diligent farmers [see Fig. 25.11]. In the mirror, however, no other narrative or genre scene detracts from the Four Continents and their world of assorted plants and animals. What these two embroideries do have in common is an emphasis on all four personifications’ status as female figures. Unlike the



FIGURE 25.15 *Needlework Mirror with the Four Continents* (c. 1660).
 Silk thread and seed pearls on silk; raised and purled
 work, 49 × 54 cm. Private Collection.
 COURTESY OF BONHAMS.

beaded panel discussed above, America and Africa are very legible as women, their bare breasts very clearly outlined in black thread. Yet, if embroidery was intended to be a morally edifying experience—both the process of making it and the beholding of its final product—what could be gained from their isolated presence on this mirror frame? In the very medium tasked with providing women with paragons of virtuous behavior, the beholder instead encountered the dark, naked heathens, their more civilized counterparts, and her own reflection.

When adorning household objects, the Four Continents furnished young well-to-do women with an armchair travel experience that was more readily accessible to their male counterparts through travel literature. Like most written and visual material about foreign peoples, these representations were filtered through a Eurocentric lens, and thus far from neutral. Nevertheless, we can regard

them as pathways to contemporary discussions about national and cultural difference, which were circulating through other channels. Beyond this function, however, these embroidered personifications enmeshed their creators and owners within emergent discourses of ideal English femininity. Following England's increased involvement in global trade and colonization, the basis of this ideal was in the process of evolving from cultural values such as civility or Christian virtue, to visible markers—namely whiteness. As the caskets and mirrors discussed in this chapter suggest, it was never too early to teach this lesson to England's female population.

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Index Nominum

- Adrian VI, Pope (Adrian Boeyens) 552
 Agathocles of Syracuse 708
 Agostini, Antonio 686, 690, 692, 695, 709
 Aguilón, François de 443
 Albert VII of Austria, Habsburg Archduke of the Netherlands 443, 629
 Alberti, Leon Battista 146, 147, 348, 350
 Alciato, Andrea xxvi, xxviii, 539, 645, 646
 Alexander the Great 226, 707
 Allori, Alessandro xxx, 692, 694, 696
 Ambrose of Milan 472
 Ambrose, Aurelius Ambrosius, Saint 472, 495 n. 8
 Apelles of Cos 25, 525
 Aristotle of Stagira 121, 479
 Augustine (of Hippo, Saint) 421, 439, 474, 495 n. 9, 548
 Augustus (Roman emperor) xxx, 37, 226, 419, 699, 701 n. 62
 Ausonius. Decimus Magnus 376, 385–386
- Bacon, Francis 567, 570, 726
 Baldini, Baccio 37, 174, 176, 692, 694–695
 Baldinucci, Filippo 558–559
 Baltens, Pieter 295 n. 30
 Bartolo, Nanni di (called Il Rosso) xvi, 143, 176 n. 29
 Beham Hans Sebald xx, 348
 Bellay, Joachim du 227
 Bellenden, Thomas 248, 250 n. 28
 Belon, Pierre 718
 Benjamin, Walter 27, 82–83, 138, 149–150, 151–152, 557 n. 23
 Benson, Ambrosius 100 n. 19, 491 n. 2
 Bernard of Clairvaux, Saint 499, 501 n. 15, 502, 563, 718
 Bernard, Richard 359
 Bernini, Gian Lorenzo 203
 Bertie, Catherine, dowager Duchess of Suffolk 601
 Bèze, Theodore de 179, 268 n. 45
 Bloemaert, Abraham xxvi, 34–35, 545, 548–551, 553–555, 558–566, 569–570
- Bloemaert, Frederik xxvi, 545 n. 1, 547, 548–551, 553–555, 558–562, 564–566, 569
 Boccaccio, Giovanni x, 692, 694 n. 41
 Boemus, Joannes 682 n. 9, 720 n. 11
 Boissard, Jean-Jacques 734
 Boleyn, Anne (Queen of England) 606
 Borghini, Vincenzo 692, 694 n. 40
 Bossi, Antonio 667, 670
 Brenzoni, Nicolò 29, 143, 145, 153, 156–157
 Bruegel the Elder, Pieter 166 n. 10, 260 n. 20, 264, 284 n. 1, 322, 498 n. 10, 505
 Bry, Johan Theodore de 181, 737 n. 32
 Buonaiuti, Ernesto 476 n. 42
 Byss, Johann Rudolph 661
- C. R., Monogrammist xvii, 174, 183
 Calvin, John xxvii, 35, 520 n. 5, 601, 603–604, 606–607, 611, 621
 Carducho, Vincente 187
 Cartari, Vincenzo 423
 Catherine of Braganza xxxi, 737
 Cats, Jacob 482
 Cestius, L. 683 n. 14
 Charles II (King of England) 737
 Charles of Habsburg, Archduke 416, 418
 Charles V, Emperor 263 n. 30, 534 n. 37, 696, 699
 Chaucer, Alice, Duchess of Suffolk 35, 575–576, 578, 592, 598
 Chaucer, Geoffrey 121
 Chaucer, Matilda (Maud) 576
 Chaucer, Thomas 576
 Cicero, Marcus Tullius 4 n. 7, 13, 425, 513–514
 Cini, Giovan Battista 513 n. 58, 514
 Claudel, Paul 461
 Claudian 680, 687, 690, 709
 Clement VIII, Pope (Aldobrandini, Ippolito) 557
 Cleopatra III, Queen 708
 Cleve, Marten van 22, 170
 Clodius 285 n. 2, 334

- Cock, Hieronymus 264, 413
 Collaert, Adriaen 723
 Collin, Richard 435
 Comestor, Peter 472
 Constantine I (Roman Emperor) 454
 Coornhert, Dirck Vol(c)kertszoon 277–278,
 286 n. 6, 329, 506 n. 28
 Correggio, Antonio Alegri xxix, 687
 Cort, Cornelis xxii, 413
 Coverdale, Miles 603
 Croesus, King of Lydia 632, 650
 Cromwell, Thomas 248, 606
 Crowley, Robert xvi, 28, 95, 107–108, 110–112,
 114–117
 Croÿ, Charles de (Bishop of Tournai) 541

 Danoot, Pieter xxiii, 442
 Dante Alighieri x, 27, 74, 76–79, 83, 89, 121,
 129–130, 133, 138, 591
 David, Jan, S.J. 16, 18–22, 25–26, 30, 32, 45,
 64, 82, 128–129, 234, 245–246, 371, 376,
 378, 380, 384, 387–389, 391, 403–404,
 406–407, 411–419, 421–425, 427–429,
 464, 476, 521
 De Quincey, Thomas 461
 Decker, Cornelis 470 n. 25, 577 n. 5
 Democritus xx, 329
 Diepenbeeck, Abraham van xxiii, 437, 439,
 449, 456
 Dodoens, Rembert 718
 Dunbar, Gavin, Archbishop of Glasgow
 251
 Dwinglo, Jacob 285, 296, 335
 Dyck, Anthony van xxix, 651

 Edward VI 107, 116, 126
 Eliezer (servant of Abraham) 474
 Eppius, M. 683
 Erasmus, Desiderius xxiii, 34, 81, 253, 263,
 435, 506, 509–510, 514, 521–522, 534,
 563, 606
 Erizzo, Sebastiano 686
 Este, Leonello d' 158, 160
 Este, Meliaduse 158
 Eure, Sir William 248
 Eusebius 37, 694, 695
 Eyck, Hubert van xxvi
 Eyck, Jan van 522

 Fagel, Abigael 256, 258, 265, 274
 Fagel, Sara 265
 Farnese, Alessandro 701
 Ferdinand III (Holy Roman Emperor) 437,
 439, 442
 FitzAlan, John, Fourteenth Earl of Arundel
 586
 Floris, Frans xxiv, xxv, 37, 493, 495, 498,
 501–502, 504, 507, 526
 Francken, Ambrosius 167, 169
 Francken, Frans the Elder 632, 645, 650
 Francken, Frans the Younger 645
 François I (King of France) 498
 Freedberg, David 45, 64, 521
 Frobisher, Martin 724

 Galen = Galenus, Aelius 427
 Galle, Philip xxv
 Galle, Theodore xvi, 16
 Gandersheim, Hrotsvitha of: see Hrotsvitha
 of Gandersheim 277
 Geeraerts, Marcus: see: Gheeraerts, Marcus
 (the Elder) xxxi
 Gessner, Conrad 718
 Gheeraerts, Marcus (the Elder) xxxi
 Gilby, Antony 603
 Giraldi, Lilio Gregorio 423
 Goltzius, Hendrick xxvi, xxviii, xxx, 553,
 645, 701, 709
 Goltzius, Hubert xxx, 37, 699, 701, 704,
 709
 Goltzius, Julius 723
 Gonzaga, Vincenzo 704
 Greiffenklau, Prince-Bishop Karl Phillip von
 37, 655
 Grévin, Jacques 227, 228
 Guerra, Giovanni xxix, 85
 Guise, Mary of (Regent of Scotland) 252

 Hadrian, Emperor 680, 685, 710
 Haecht, Godevaard van 29, 163, 166–167,
 176
 Haecht, Willem van 166–167, 182
 Hakluyt, Richard 739
 Hanegreeff, Goedert 506
 Hannibal xxix, 691–692, 696
 Hätzer, Ludwig 521
 Haydocke, Richard 348

- Heemskerck, Maarten van xx, xxii, xxv, 34, 413, 518
Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich 137
Henri iv (King of France) 225, 228, 230
Henrietta Maria 736
Henry viii 107, 248, 606
Heraclitus xx, 329
Herodotus 388
Herodutus 388 n. 17, 632, 686
Hesius, Guilielmus (Willem) xxiv, 33, 468
Heyns, Peeter 31, 256, 262
Heyns, Zacharias xix
Hilliard, Nicholas 344 n. 24
Hiniosa, Jan de 506
Hollar, Wenceslaus 719
Hondius, Hendrik 467
Horace = Horatius, Quintus Flaccius 419, 682, 690
Horenbault, Jacques xix, 290
Hornes, Philippe Eugène de xxiii, 442
Hrotsvitha of Gandersheim 277

Ignatius of Loyola, Saint 475
Immerseel, Théodore d' xxiii, 452, 455
Isabella Clara Eugenia, Habsburg Archduchess of the Netherlands 445, 629

Jacob, Hildebrand 664
James i and vi (King of Scotland and England) 250
James v (king of Scotland) 30, 234, 248, 251–252
Jansz, Louris 285 n. 3, 286, 294 n. 24, 305, 328–329
Jarba, King 692 n. 38
Jode, Gerard de 718, 727
Jode, Pieter de 651
John of the Cross 188
John the Baptist, St. 307–308, 322, 536, 585
John, Saint (Evangelist) 483, 485, 536
John, St. (apostle) 87, 318, 651
Jones, Inigo 340
Jonson, Ben 340, 355 n. 2, 356
Jordaens, Jacob 467, 482
Josephus, Titus Falvius 680
Juba i, King 709
Juba ii, King 709
Junius, Hadrianus 507

Karlstadt, Andreas Bodenstein von 521–522
Koning, Abraham de 277, 285 n. 3, 286–287, 296, 327 n. 107

Lacman, Jean 435
Lamy, Bernard 563–565, 569
Langland, William 27–28, 95, 99
Latomus, Jacobus 542
Laurensz, Hendrick 181
Laureysz., Vincent 505
Lawet, Robert 285, 286 n. 4, 296, 299
Le Brun, Charles 661
Leerse, Philippe 435
Legatus, Marcus Eppius 683 n. 14
Lely, Peter 742
Leman, John 360
Leonardo [da Vinci] 148–149, 344, 348
Leopold of Habsburg, Archduke 416, 418
Leopold William (Archduke of Austria) 454–455
LePois, Antoine 709 n. 77
Lipsius, Justus 633–634
Locke, Anne (Lok, Lock) 35, 601, 603–609, 611–612, 614–618, 621–624
Lomazzo, Giovanni Paolo 348
Lombard, Lambert 34, 491, 493, 495, 498, 501, 504, 506
Lommelin, Adriaan 447
Louis xiii (King of France) 227
Luther, Martin 521–522, 527, 542
Lydgate, John 35, 575–576, 592–594, 598
Lyndsay, Sir David, of the Mount 30, 234

Machiavello, Niccolò 633 n. 10
Macropedius, Georgius 274
Magdalene, Saint Mary 470, 472, 481–482, 485
Maitland, Elizabeth: see: Murray, Elizabeth
Mander, Karel van ix, 22, 480, 484 n. 66, 491 n. 1, 511 n. 48, 512 n. 52, 547, 562
Mander, Karl van 638
Marchand, Guy xxvii
Marees, Pieter de 740
Maria Anna of Bavaria, Archduchess 420
Marius, Q.C. 690
Marot, Clément 501
Martini, Simone 153
Mary i (Queen of England) 606, 717 n. 2

- Mary, Mother of God 33, 36, 85, 91, 156, 462, 472, 476, 481–482, 485, 498, 503, 528
- Masen, Jacob 478, 481, 484, 485 n. 69
- Massys, Jan xxiv, 34, 495, 498, 501, 506–507, 510
- Matthioli, Pietro Andrea 718
- Medici, Cosimo de 176 n. 29, 692
- Medici, Cosimo I de' 174
- Medici, Francesco de 692, 694 n. 40
- Medici, Giovanni de' 174
- Mekerchus, Adolphus 701
- Mellini, Domenico 692, 694 n. 40
- Mesens, Jacob xviii, 187
- Mettelus, L. Cecilius 690
- Mettelus, Scipio 683 n. 14, 709
- Middleton, Thomas 342 n. 19
- Mignon, Jean xxv, 34, 498
- Morel, Ferdinand xxiii, 437
- Morel, Johannes Michael 437
- Moretus, Jan 371 n. 1, 380
- Munday, Anthony 355–357, 359–360, 363–364
- Murray, Elizabeth xxxii, 742
- Nadal, Jerónimo (Natalis, Hieronymus) xxiv, 33, 474 n. 37, 475–476, 478–479
- Nero 632
- Neumann, Balthasar 659, 667, 670
- Noirot, Jean 505
- Norbana, C. 683, 685 n. 15
- Nyssa, Gregory of 145
- Occo, Adolf 683
- Orsini, Fulvio 683, 685 n. 15, 701
- Ortelius, Abraham xxx–xxxi, 37, 696, 699, 701, 720, 722–724, 726
- Ovid (Ovidius, Publius Nas) 15, 424–425, 682, 718
- Palladius 97, 98
- Parmigianino (Mazzola, Girolamo Francesco Maria) 153 n. 13, 547, 687 n. 21
- Parrhasius of Ephesus 480
- Pascal, Blaise 567, 569
- Passe, Crispijn van de (the Elder) xx, 329, 547 n. 4, 723
- Paul of Tarsus, Saint (Apostle) 287, 310 n. 61, 314 n. 70, 426 n. 77, 475, 484 n. 68, 498, 510, 526–527, 556, 562
- Peacham, Henry 162–163, 165, 182–183, 562–565, 718
- Perrière, Guillaume de La 178
- Pers, Dirck 466, 479
- Peter, Saint (Apostle) 482
- Petrarca, Francesco: see Petrarch
- Petrarch x, 153
- Phidias 376, 385
- Philip II (King of Spain) 174, 268
- Philips Galle xx, xxv, 376 n. 1, 498 n. 10, 724
- Piles, Roger de 464 n. 6, 664
- Pisanello x, xvi, xvii, 29, 143, 146–147, 149, 151–158, 160
- Plantin, Christophe xxv, xxviii, 507 n. 31, 683 n. 12
- Plautus 270
- Pliny the Elder 694
- Pole, William de la, Duke of Suffolk 576 n. 4, 586 n. 12
- Politian, Angelo Ambrogini 385
- Prudentius 268
- Pseudo-Dionysius 186, 202
- Ptolemy I Soter xxx, 707
- Purchas, Samuel 719, 739
- Puttenham, George 338, 359 n. 7, 622 n. 69
- Quellinus, Erasmus xxiii, 435
- Quintilian, Marcus Fabius 3, 4, 6, 9, 616 n. 49
- Raphael Sanzio xxv, 526 n. 20
- Raphael Sanzio, of Urbino 526 n. 20
- Rebecca (wife of Isaac) 474
- Reggius, Raffaelin da 696 n. 52
- Reynolds, Sir Joshua 664
- Ripa, Cesare 37, 188, 439, 454, 466, 513 n. 56, 630, 677, 679, 683 n. 15, 689 n. 24, 718
- Romano, Giulio xxix, 691, 720 n. 13
- Rontsaet, Jacop Pieterse 285 n. 3
- Rovenius, Philippus 559
- Rughesi, Fausto xxx, 704

- Sadeler [Aegidius, Jan, or Raphael] 176 n. 31,
724 n. 16
Sadeler, Johann xxviii, 723
Sallust 686
Salomon, Bernard 718
Sandt, Nicolas van der 186
Sansovino, Jacopo 534
Sanzio, Raphael xxv, 526 n. 20
Sarto, Andrea del xxv, 34, 498, 526, 534
Schonaeus, Cornelius 271
Scipio Africanus 691, 696
Scorel, Jan van 522
Seneca 632, 634
Septimius Severus, Emperor 683 n. 12
Serwouters, Pieter xix, 297
Shakespeare, William xx, 337, 342 n. 19
Sidney, Sir Philip 339
Silva, Miguel de 689
Smith, Thomas 598
Soarez, Cyprien, S.J. 13, 14 n. 56, 408 n. 37
Solon 632, 633 n. 6, 650
Speed, John 719
Spenser, Edmund xii, xiii, xvi, 27–28, 47, 56,
124 n. 5, 125
Spiere, Rijssaert van 285, 286 n. 4, 296, 301,
315
Spranger, Bartholomeus 547
Staden, Hans 723
Stafford, John xxxi, 727
Stalbeemt, Adriaen van 638–650
Strabo 37, 701
Suavis, Lambert 491 n. 1
Swanenburch, Willem Isaacsz. xix, 284
- Terence 270
Teresa of Avila 188, 203
Thevet, André 723
Tiepolo, Giambattista xxix, 37, 655, 706
Tiepolo, Giandomenico 706
Tiepolo, Giovanni Battista: see: Tiepolo,
Giambattista
Timon of Athens xx, 31, 32, 337, 342,
344 n. 22
Tollemache, Elizabeth: see: Murray,
Elizabeth
Tyndale, William 603, 609 n. 22
- Valeriano, Pierio 37, 685, 689
Van Mander, Karel ix, 22, 480, 484 n. 66, 491
n. 1, 511 n. 48, 512 n. 52, 547, 562
Varazze, Jacopo da: see Voragine, Jacobus de
Vasari, Giorgio 434 n. 5, 692, 694 n. 40
Vaughan, Stephen 605
Vecchi, Giovanni de' xxx, 701
Vecellio, Cesare xxxi, 734
Veen, Otto van xxvi, 567–569
Vermeer, Johannes xxiv, 33, 462 n. 5, 464
n. 8, 465 n. 11, 466 n. 12, 466 n. 16, 467
n. 17, 467 n. 18, 468 n. 22
Vinci, Leonardo da xvi, 344
Vinckboons, David xix, 284
Virgil 15, 89, 225
Vivere, Gerard van den 263
Vives, Juan Luis 34, 263, 272 n. 62, 501, 507,
509 n. 36, 618 n. 57
Vivre, Gérard de: see Vivere, Gerard van den
Voragine, Jacobus de 145 n. 2
Vos, Maerten de (Maarten) xvii, xix, xxviii,
29, 163, 520 n. 4, 643, 723, 724 n. 16, 723,
724 n. 17
Vrints, Johannes Baptista, the Elder xix, 295
- Wesbusch, Paschier van 22, 547 n. 6
White, John 73
Whitney, Geoffrey 362
Wierix, Antoon II xvii, 170, 179, 200
Wierix, Hieronymus xvii, xix, xx, xxiv, 167,
173, 179, 298, 311
Wierix, Johannes xvii, xx, 163, 322
William of Orange, Prince 173
Wither, George 718, 736–737, 740
- Ximenez, Jacobus 478
- Zetter, Jacob de xvii, 181
Zeuxis of Heraclea 480
Zuccaro, Federigo 701
Zuccaro, Taddeo xxx, 37, 696
Zwingli, Ulrich 521, 522 n. 9